AUSTRALIA COAST TO COAST

MARCH 2016

COUNTRY STYLE

the art issue

ESCAPE THE EVERYDAY

THE ARTIST & THE FARMER *Life on a Riverina property*

HOW THE COUNTRY INSPIRES OUR LEADING PAINTERS



20 regional art galleries to visit

EASTER MAGIC CHOCOLATE, EGGS & BUNNIES

SURF STAR SALLY FITZGIBBONS' COUNTRY CHILDHOOD



The Australian landscape is a powerful inspiration and there is no shortage of artists living in the country. Morgan Allender in the Adelaide Hills mixing flowers and oils; printmakers in the NSW artists' town of Hill End; ceramicist Alison Fraser; painter Lucy Culliton with her wild garden — they all fill our pages this month.

My personal favourite is on page 73: we asked four leading painters how rural life has shaped their work. Archibald winner Cherry Hood, who moved from busy inner-city Sydney to the NSW Southern Tablelands, found the stillness inspiring. "It's so quiet, the air is fresh — and I think the sky and the feeling of space, of being able to see forever, is good for the psyche. It's a great sense of freedom. I can work whenever I want for as long as I want," she says. Many of them mention 'community' while Luke Sciberras is busy working towards his exhibition: "My studio is now filling with a new body of works which populate my life like wonderful new friends."

Over the years several of you have asked if you could buy prints of our covers, so we thought an illustration of the cover would be a great way to celebrate our special Art Issue. We asked Pip Spiro to create the watercolour on the facing page especially for you and we'd love to see what you do with it in your home. Enter our Instagram competition (details below) and you could win a fantastic prize from Berger Paints.

In this issue, we also chat to Norma Ingram, one of the first Indigenous Australians to go to Harvard, in the first of our new series Community 100 in association with Lions Australia. Read her inspiring story and turn to page 35 to see how you can help make a difference, too.

Enjoy the issue.

Victoria

Victoria Carey



CREATE & WIN

Thanks to Berger Paints, you could win a painter for a day and 16L of paint, valued at $894.50, plus the gorgeous original cover artwork, painted by Pip Spiro and valued at $1,500.

TO ENTER *Create an image featuring* Country Style's *March illustrated cover and share it on Instagram: use #countrystylelovespaint and tag @countrystylemag.*

'Stash' **desk** (as background), $699, from Blu Dot. 'Jali' **fabric** in Pink, $89 a metre, from No Chintz. Palomino 'Blackwing' **pencil**, $4.95, from Paper2. Berger Everlast low-sheen interior **paint** in (from top) Perfect Rose and Octavius Oak, $65 for four litres; and Sky Flyer (in bowl), $59.90 for four litres. Bowl, linen, timber laminate and marble tile, stylist's own. **For stockist details, see page 143.**

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY **SHARYN CAIRNS** PHOTOGRAPHY **GUY BAILEY** STYLING **DANIELLE SELIG** STYLING ASSISTANT **NATALIE JOHNSON**
ENTRIES OPEN ON 25.02.2016 AT 00:01 AEDT AND CONCLUDES ON 23.03.2016 AT 23:59 AEDT. ENTRY IS OPEN TO AUSTRALIAN RESIDENTS AGED 18 YEARS AND OVER ONLY. WINNER WILL BE DETERMINED AT 14:00 AEST ON 20.04.2016 AT LEVEL 1, 2 HOLT STREET, SURRY HILLS, NSW 2010. WINNER'S NAME WILL BE PUBLISHED ON HOMELIFE.COM.AU AND VIA AN INSTAGRAM POST ON COUNTRY STYLE. TOTAL PRIZE POOL VALUED AT $2,394.50 (INCLUDING GST). FOR FULL TERMS AND CONDITIONS SEARCH "COUNTRY STYLE VIGNETTE" AT HOMELIFE.COM.AU.


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ENDURING STYLE

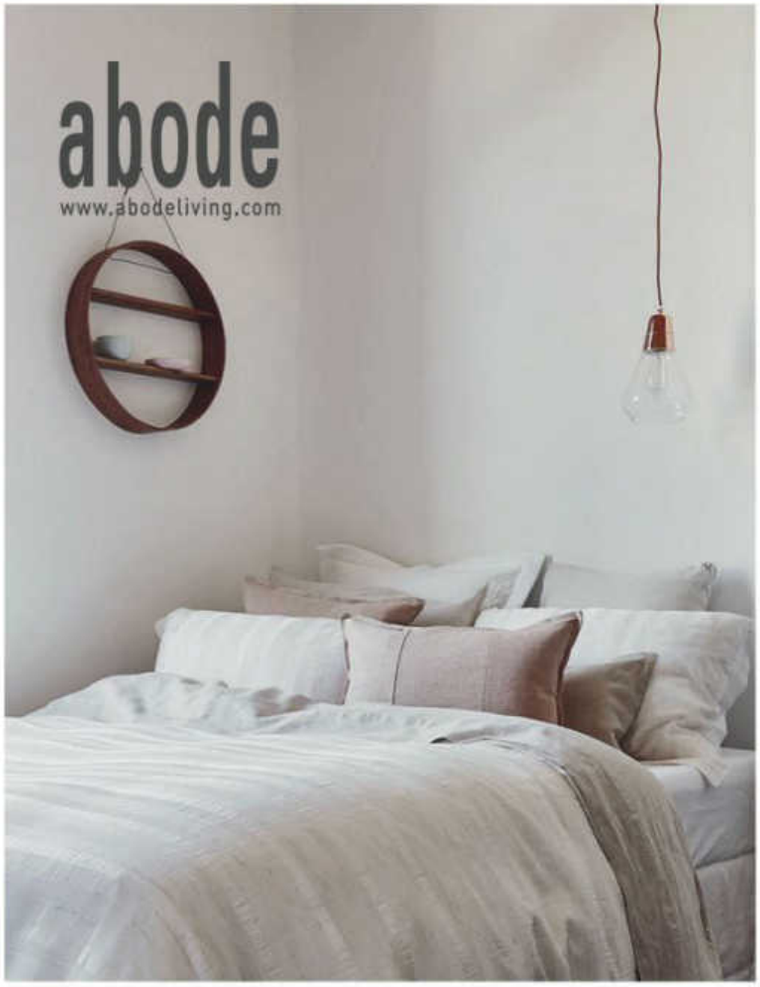
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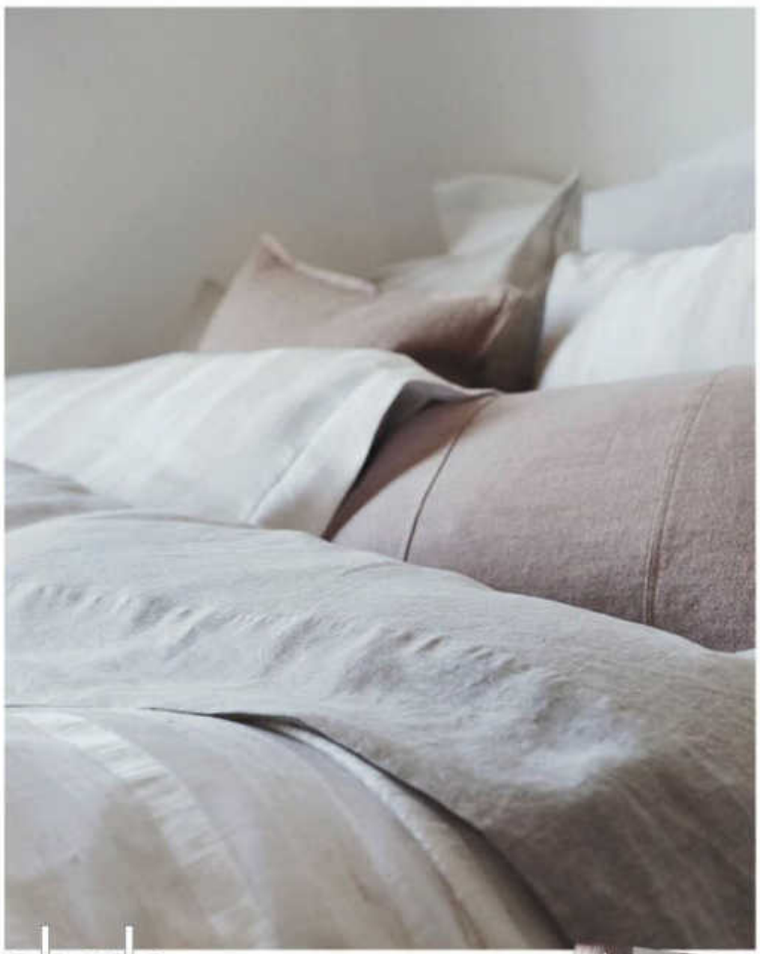
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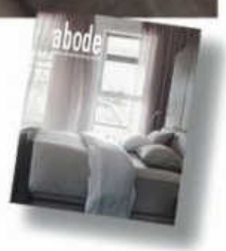


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in this issue...



PIP SPIRO

We asked Brisbane artist Pip Spiro to paint this month's cover to re-create a very special edition.



"The opportunity to take such rich, vivid photographs and re-create them with paint on paper was such a fun process," says Pip, who exhibits her detailed watercolour paintings once or twice a year but works mainly by commission. An avid drawer since childhood, "art was my favourite subject but I took the safe, well-trodden path of a university degree in business," she says. "In 2011 I took a leap of faith and quit my job to find my 'thing'. I feel lucky to say this rarely feels like work." Nature is a key inspiration and family holidays at Roma in south-west Queensland are a treasured memory. "Nothing beats that fresh country air." *pipshining.blogspot.com.au*



CLARE PATIENCE

We asked this talented writer to find Australia's best regional art experiences. See her picks on page 89.



Researching this month's Journey story prompted more than a few holiday ideas for Clare, who recently moved from Sydney to the NSW Blue Mountains with her young family. "I was amazed at the depth and breadth of art experiences in spectacular locations in Australia," she says. "Each state and territory has unique regional galleries that cater for all ages — I started planning many dream road trips." Exploring the area around her new home has also uncovered some significant sites. "It's pretty extraordinary discovering the ancient land of the Gundungurra and Darug Aboriginal people, whose artworks can be found in caves and rock faces throughout the area."

WORDS CATHERINE McCORMACK PHOTOGRAPHY ALICIA TAYLOR



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PHOTOGRAPHY LISA COHEN, MARK ROPER

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OUR COVER

See our special 'Artists in Residence' decorating story on page 66 for our how to get the cover look.

PHOTOGRAPHY *Lisa Cohen*
STYLING *Tess Newman-Morris*

ON THE COVER
Wooden **table**, $395, from Kabinett. **ON TABLE, FROM LEFT** Brass **cup**, $60, from Montreux. **Pencils** and **brushes** (in cup), stylist's own. Vintage art **books**, from $12 each, from The Junk Company. **Paint swatches** (from top): Berger Phelan Pearl, Carnival Rose and Dimple, all from Inspirations Paint; Porter's Paints Birthday Candle; Berger Harry's Red Wagon, from Inspirations Paint. **Glass**, stylist's own. Enamel **jug**, $18, from Red Cart Vintage. Bridget Bodenham oval moon **dish**, $35. Vintage Japanese raku-ware **teacup** (on dish), $35 a pair, from Kazari. Maple syrup **bucket**, $65, from Montreux. Enamel **jug**, $36, from Red Cart Vintage. Shilo Engelbrecht 'Rosa Frihet' digitally printed **fabric** (as background), POA. **Flowers** from Say It With Flowers. **For stockist details, see page 143.**

PHOTOGRAPHY **SHARYN CAIRNS, FELIX FOREST, PRUE RUSCOE, CHINA SQUIRREL**

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Products shown: Porter's new children's collection wallpaper Clouds in Storm, on skirting, Porter's Aqua Gloss Enamel in Aniseed.



INSTAGRAM
We first met Dudley the dachshund in our Christmas issue, in a story on UK stylist Marie Nichols — and have kept up with his exploits via Marie's Instagram. With nearly 1500 likes, this photograph of Dudley proves he has plenty of fans. Follow Marie @marienichols.

YOUR PAGE

A BOND BETWEEN MATES, MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE AND THE BEST WELCOME HOME PRESENT OF ALL.



Our January issue struck a chord with all fans of a hot, true-blue Aussie summer. ***Photography Lisa Cohen***
This is glamping at its best. ***Maree Lewis***
Oh joy! I'm visiting Australia from NZ. This means I can take a fresh edition back home to Auckland! ***Marlene Bayley***
This issue is brilliant. Ticks all the boxes for me. Love love love! ***Jane Graystone***
Mine's been read cover to cover already and now it's waiting for my sister-in-law to arrive as I pass it on to her. ***Susan Williams***
More brownie points for me if I nip out and get my better half a copy. Thanks to your mag, we bought a homestead. ***Dean Gale***

THANKS, FROM THE ART

I want to sincerely thank *Country Style* for the art within your pages, and the artists featured. I had always promised myself that once I turn 60 I would go back to my art — I am 60 later in the year. But how do you do that in a small country town when the TAFEs have dropped art classes? So, out of the blue I enrolled in an online course and have just completed the first unit of my BA in Fine Art and Visual Culture. It has been a huge effort but so wonderful. The discussion forum with the other students from all around the world has been brilliant. A huge thank you for providing such interesting art-related stories and features. *Country Style* has unlocked a door and opened a window to let my dreams fly before it's too late.
Sue Haslinden, BOMBALA, NSW

NO PLACE LIKE IT

Why would you want a white Christmas when you can have a warm Christmas? The front cover of your January issue just filled me with gratitude for the place I call home. Nothing compares to our island home. Our Australia.
Olivia Denahy, DURAL, NSW

SIGHT FOR SORE EYES

Last year my husband and I went overseas for seven months, touring the US, UK and Europe. I kept my subscription to *Country Style* going, and one of the best things returning to Australia in December was to be greeted by the waiting pile of *Country Style* magazines. I flicked through all of them in the first few days and now I am catching up with all the wonderful stories that you give us every month. It is truly a lovely magazine and makes you appreciate what a wonderful country we live in. Keep up the great work.
Lynne Taylor,
MANSFIELD, VICTORIA

WINNER

FRIENDS FOREVER

I should have written this years ago but your January issue prompted me now. In April 1996, we moved to Tura Beach on NSW's south coast. We were fortunate to have lovely neighbours, Janne and Jack, and it was Janne who introduced me to *Country Style* and would pass on each issue when she had finished reading it. We only lived at Tura Beach for two years before moving to Wodonga in Victoria, but every three months Janne would bundle up a couple of issues and send them to me. I dread to think what it cost her in postage!
In December, I received your January issue with a note that I had a year's subscription. I rang Janne, thinking she would know something about it — and she had organised the subscription, saying that sometimes she feels she is a little late in getting them sent to me. What a caring and thoughtful person!
Every time I read *Country Style*, I think of Jack and Janne, even though Jack passed away two years ago. You've helped keep up our friendship for 20 years!
Lyn Bethune,
BARANDUDA, VICTORIA



Congratulations to Lyn, who has won a voucher to the value of $500 from Eva's Sunday, an Australian designer and fashion retailer; evassunday.com.au

Share your thoughts and experiences with us by writing to *Country Style*, Locked Bag 5030, Alexandria, NSW 2015, or by emailing austcountrystyle@news.com.au. Please include your address and daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity.

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write and win!

COUNTRY STYLE'S SHORT STORY COMPETITION IS BACK WITH A $5000 PRIZE.

WHETHER YOU ARE an experienced writer or a novice, a polished wordsmith or someone who simply enjoys dreaming up stories, enter *Country Style*'s Short Story Competition and you could see your work in print *and* win a prize of $5000! Your story can involve any situation or setting, but it must incorporate 'thread' as a major or minor theme. The deadline is approaching, so it's time to start writing — we look forward to reading your imaginative response!

PRIZE The winning entrant will receive $5000.

TO ENTER Email your story, along with your name, address and daytime telephone number, to countrystylecompetition@news.com.au. Or mail it to STORY, *Country Style*, Locked Bag 5030, Alexandria, NSW 2015. The entries, which will not be returned, must be no longer than 1500 words and cannot have been published previously. Please use a 10-point font with 1.5-line spacing. The closing date is April 20, 2016.

Entries close at 23:59 AEST on 20.04.2016. Open to Australian residents aged 18 years and over only. Winner determined at 10:00 AEST on 18.05.2016 at Level 1, 2 Holt Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010. The winner will be announced and their story published in the August 2016 issue of Country Style*, on sale 14.07.2016. Total prize pool valued at $5000. For full terms and conditions, visit homelife.com.au/terms*

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NSW head of sales, Premium Living JASMINE HARRISON (02) 8045 4659
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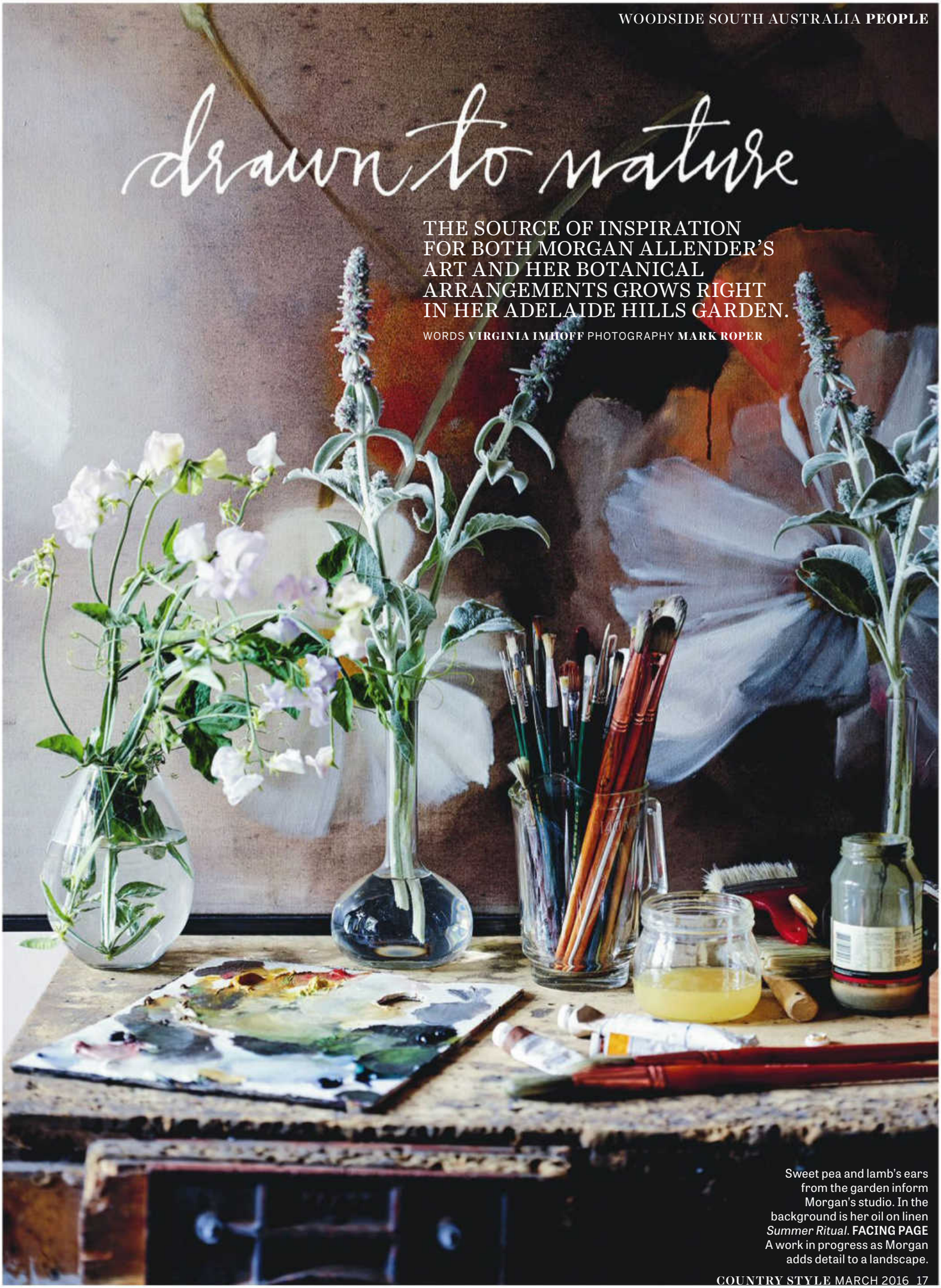

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drawn to nature

THE SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR BOTH MORGAN ALLENDER'S ART AND HER BOTANICAL ARRANGEMENTS GROWS RIGHT IN HER ADELAIDE HILLS GARDEN.

WORDS **VIRGINIA IMHOFF** PHOTOGRAPHY **MARK ROPER**



Sweet pea and lamb's ears from the garden inform Morgan's studio. In the background is her oil on linen *Summer Ritual*. **FACING PAGE** A work in progress as Morgan adds detail to a landscape.

FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Morgan gathers Queen Anne's lace in the garden of her Adelaide Hills cottage; a giclee photographic print from a recent exhibition hangs above the studio's flower bench; wild and blousey flowerbeds are contained by old stone walls; tools of the trade for Morgan's art.

The scene through the window of Morgan Allender's converted hay shed studio is a picture postcard of her ideal world. There's the quaint stone cottage with loose-petalled roses climbing the verandah, her picking garden brimming with nodding pastel blooms and a cluster of orchard trees, all set in the folds of the sunbathed Adelaide Hills.

Morgan, 33, lives at Woodside, 36 kilometres south-east of Adelaide, with her partner Justin Hermes and a menagerie of pets. Her surroundings give her a sense of place and the landscape is her muse. "The views through the window and the hills are intoxicating — it's my inspiration," she says.

Her large-scale paintings are darkly moody and sensuous. With a botanical theme and in the style of 17th-century Dutch still life, they often depict the flowers that she loves and grows herself — luscious full-cupped roses, daisies, hydrangeas and hellebores all casually strewn as if just plucked from the garden outside.

They're the sort of blooms she uses in her floral business The Tenth Meadow for weddings and events, where her creations are unselfconsciously "loose and rambling" and wildly unconventional. "The clients who come to me are drawn to nature — and to gardens," she says.

This love of flowers, gardens and nature is interwoven in Morgan's art, her floral business and her life with Justin, a furniture maker. Between them they have two dogs — cairn terriers Little and Boots — Chippy the orphan lamb, a few chickens and Pickle the ginger cat, on their three-hectare farm. "I'm a painter first," she says. "My work with flowers is a lovely addition to that."

Morgan grew up in the Adelaide Hills. Her mother Winnie Pelz is a well-known South Australian artist and was the initial influence on Morgan's creativity and artistic career path. "As a kid I was taken to every exhibition opening," she recalls. "That's one of the reasons why I'm creative." Through her mother, Morgan also inherited a love of gardens. "I grew up with a mother who loved gardening. Mum makes beautiful gardens everywhere she goes."

Morgan studied art at university, majoring in painting. Then, in 2006, she and Justin moved to Melbourne, where he studied furniture technology. His business, Justin Hermes Design, is now based in Adelaide. "We moved back in 2009," she says. "I was living off my artwork, then the GFC hit and sales started dwindling."

Morgan started a floral business, initially called The Bluebell Society, to supplement her income. "It was a way to support my art work, a necessity, but also a way of doing something I love," she says. "It's about form and colour and balance, composition and harmony. Making a painting is quite a similar process, though more drawn-out. Flowers are quick, so the result is satisfying and you are working with people, whereas painting is solitary."

Her craving for her own plot of earth was one of the reasons the couple returned to South Australia. "The love of gardening drew me, and we started looking in the Hills for a place where we could grow things," Morgan says. >





"THE VIEWS AND THE HILLS ARE INTOXICATING — IT'S MY INSPIRATION."











“I’M A PAINTER FIRST. MY WORK WITH FLOWERS IS A LOVELY ADDITION.”





Meet Little and Boots in Dog Tales on page 96.



Morgan and Justin's cottage is just as she had visualised — roses dripping from verandahs nestled in a flourishing garden. **FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT** Morgan, adding her favourite roses, styles her flowers in a loose and natural way. "I work with roses in everything I do," she says; a spray of Queen Anne's lace and potted ornamental grape in front of her painting *The Golden Hour*; Little (left) and Boots keep an eye on the farm from the studio door; art and flowers are intertwined in Morgan's life.

They found their tiny mid-19th-century stone cottage and fell in love with it, but didn't believe they had a hope of buying it. "We drove up at dusk and it was semi-derelict, surrounded by weeds and grass, and completely romantic," Morgan says. They put in an offer, which was declined — but in a twist of fate, a few weeks later the sale had fallen through and it was theirs. She and Justin have spent the past five years "patching up", doing most of the work themselves — he has made furniture, tables and kitchen benchtops — and they are now at the stage where they want to do a more authentic restoration.

Morgan loves creating arrangements with the cottage garden flowers she adores, the "English floral aesthetic". "I like to use rambling roses, foliage and local irises, plus a lot of flowers from commercial growers that I'll use to evoke their aesthetic," she says. "Then I'll add some of my own garden flowers to bring the arrangement to life."

She works from the hay shed studio that Justin restored for her, doing her flowers and painting. A few months ago, she exhibited her paintings in Adelaide. The showing, titled *Seeing Spring*, sold well, and she plans to sell smaller paintings and prints from her online gallery. "They will be flower studies in oil on linen that will be easier to freight."

Life imitates art — and in Morgan's world it's also vice versa. "The subject I work in is landscape and botanical themes, and where you live affects your life," she says. "I love it here and it really can feel a thousand miles from anywhere. That's a good thing. It's why we live in the country." CS

For more information, telephone 0401 884 256 or visit tenthmeadow.com and morganallender.com. Justin's furniture is at justinhermesdesign.com



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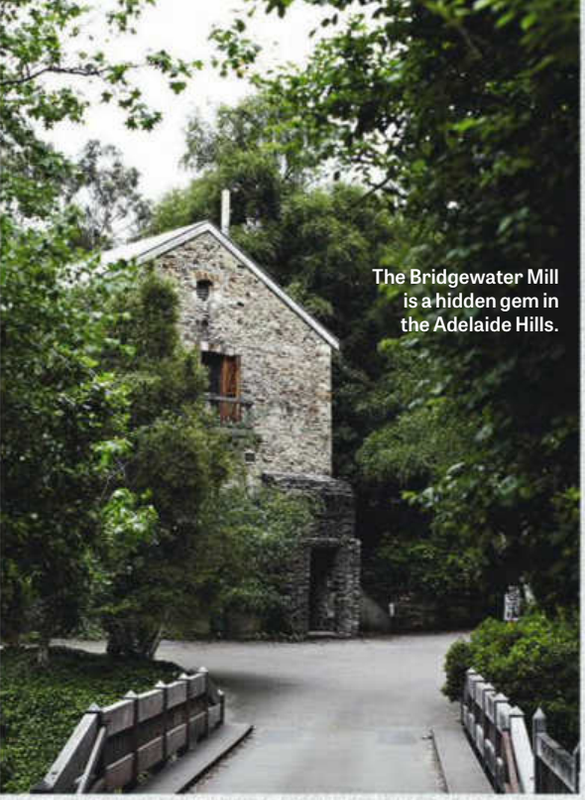


Artist Lucy Culliton's garden at Bibbenluke in NSW's Bombala Shire is a journey of discovery. See our story on page 58.

PHOTOGRAPHY **MICHAEL WEE**

March

Autumn's arrival means art events to embrace, while Annabelle Hickson reflects on chasing artistic dreams.



The Bridgewater Mill is a hidden gem in the Adelaide Hills.

book a table

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Bridgewater Mill It may no longer be in partnership with Petaluma winery, but head chef Zac Ronayne is still in the kitchen at The Bridgewater Mill. Recent times have seen the introduction of a wine lounge with open fires, lounges and wing-back chairs. In addition to the restaurant menu, where much of the produce is sourced from the Mill's two new gardens, Zac creates regional platters using the local produce. It's a little jazzy, a little country and fine dining, all combined with a warm, relaxed atmosphere. ***(08) 8339 9200; thebridgewatermill.com.au***

NSW ***Eschalot*** Housed in one of Berrima's heritage buildings, Eschalot's new autumn menu brims with fresh produce from an onsite garden that has been tended to for more than nine years. Chef Richard Kemp's seasonal dishes celebrate the local Southern Highlands spatchcock, duck and lamb alongside spinaches, chards and pumpkin. ***(02) 4877 1977; eschalot.com.au***

WA ***Pepper & Salt*** On the grounds of Denmark's Forest Hill vineyard on the south coast, Pepper & Salt restaurant is owned and run by Silas and Angela Masih. Chef Silas develops menus influenced by his Fijian–Indian heritage to match the cool-climate wines of the boutique winery. Dishes include soft shell mud crab with kaffir lime sherbet, hot and sour tamarind and green apple kuchla pickle. Silas also teaches Fijian–Indian cooking classes on Mondays and Tuesdays. ***(08) 9848 3053; pepperandsalt.com.au***

buy local at the market

NSW ***Bangalow Farmers' Market 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th*** So then, what is the secret to getting your hands on a bag of Coopers Shoot vine-ripened Roma tomatoes or a tub of Nimbin Valley Dairy's Sainte Billie, a luscious fresh goat's curd? Get in early! Regulars also swear by Byron Gourmet Pasta's homemade ravioli — choose from seven different types — and the various fermented condiments from Byron Bay Alive Foods. This lovely weekly market, held in the Bangalow Hotel's carpark in Byron Street, appeals to cooks. Afterwards, stop by one of the local cafés for breakfast — our pick is Town, for its coffee and apple tart. ***Open 8am–11am. 0414 595 169.***

VICTORIA ***Churchill Island Farmers' Market 26th*** It may not be very big, but Churchill Island *is* definitely an island. Connected by a 100-metre single-span bridge to Phillip Island in Western Port south of Melbourne, the 50-hectare island is renowned for its nature walks, koalas and penguin colony — and surprisingly busy farmers' market. Most of the producers are drawn from the rich agricultural region of Gippsland. Rayners Orchard will be there with the last of the stone fruit for the season — three types of peaches and four plums — as will Nicolas olive oil from Dimboola in western Victoria. ***Open 8am–1pm. rfm.net.au***

foodies paradise

VICTORIA ***Camp-Out at Heide Museum of Modern Art 5th*** This overnight event in Melbourne's outer east includes a tour of Heide's original farmhouse and picturesque gardens. Enjoy a meal in Café Vue, Vue de Monde's onsite outpost, then retire to your tent for a nightcap. Bookings essential. Tickets are $185. ***(03) 9850 1500; heide.com.au***

NSW ***Tweed Gallery Cafe at Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre*** You'll like more than the art at this gallery near the NSW–Queensland border. The cafe has stunning views, locally grown tea and organic coffee, cheese boards, salads and desserts. ***(02) 6672 5088; tweedgallerycafe.com.au***



gardens

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Wagner's Rose Nursery Open Day 27th One of Australia's longest-running and largest rose nurseries, Wagner's Open Day in Kalangadoo, near Mount Gambier, will showcase more than 600 varieties of roses, along with offering coffee, wine tastings and seasonal local produce. ***(08) 8739 3321; wagnersrosenursery.com.au***



Luxury camping on Stradbroke Island.

weekend away

QUEENSLAND

Flash Camp Pop-Up Hotel, Stradbroke Island 24th–April 10th Combine your love of nature with your love of (glamorous) camping and book a tent at Flash Camp's pop-up hotel on Adam's Beach. The tents include king beds, sumptuous doonas, bamboo deck chairs and solar lighting, showers and fresh towels. From $220 per night. Bookings essential. ***1800 113 640; flashcamp.com.au/straddiecamping***

VICTORIA *Villa Gusto*

After a refurbishment that includes a swimming pool, Villa Gusto near Mount Buffalo is open to the public as a luxury B&B offering full breakfasts. Owner and manager Ben Edwards has also introduced a wine bar experience for guests, curating an onsite cellar that showcases wines of the region. Rooms start at $310 per night, with a two-night minimum on weekends. ***(03) 5756 2000; villagusto.com.au***

visit an art gallery

NT *The Nature of Paper 12th–August 21st*

Darwin artist Winsome Jobling is a paper-maker of international standing. She finds and harvests plants from across the Top End, turning them into tactile, sensual installations and imagery. This exhibition at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory spans 30 years of Winsome's work. ***(08) 8999 8264; magnt.net.au***

TASMANIA *Michelangelo: The Exhibition 12th–May 22nd*

Burnie Regional Art Gallery shows an exhibition which demonstrates why the great Michelangelo's (1475–1564) paintings and sculptures are among the most famous in history. Entry is $14 for adults, $5 for children. ***(03) 6430 5875; burniearts.net***

put in the diary for next month...

The Agrarian Experience Cooking Class 28th

The Agrarian Kitchen is a sustainable farm-based cooking school set in a 19th-century schoolhouse in Tasmania's Derwent Valley. This class begins with a forage in the garden for fruit and vegetables, before preparing lunch with co-owner Rodney Dunn. Bookings are essential, and the cost is $385 per person. (03) 6261 1099; theagrariankitchen.com

take an art class

NSW *Cherry Hood Workshop 5th–6th*

Archibald Prize-winner Cherry Hood is hosting workshops in her farm studio at Towrang near Goulburn. She shows students her process for painting in watercolour, then allows them to create their own art. The cost is $490 per person, plus two nights' catered accommodation in either Cherry's stone homestead or the Art Studio Apartment for an additional $180. Bookings are essential. ***cherryhood.co***

NT *Maruku Arts Dot Painting Workshop*

Held at Ayers Rock Resort, near the Town Square Lawn Area, daily in the morning and afternoon, local Indigenous artists teach about the different symbols depicting 'creation time' stories used in traditional Anangu paintings. Create your own dot artwork to take home as a memento of your experience. Bookings are essential. Adults from $69. ***1300 134 044; ayersrockresort.com.au***

best in show

VICTORIA *Kyneton Autumn Flower Show 5th–6th*

The Kyneton Horticultural Society presents its annual Autumn Flower Show in the Watts Pavilion at Kyneton Showground. Highlights include blooming dahlias, roses, autumn cut flowers and shrubs, pot plants and floral art. ***(03) 5422 7130.***

NSW *Goulburn Rose Festival 12th–13th*

This features thousands of roses, including the apricot pink City of Goulburn Rose. There is also an art exhibition and sale by the Goulburn & District Art Society, and a contest in which people of all ages can enter roses for judging. Held at Goulburn Soldiers Club on Market Street. Entry is $5 for adults. ***1800 353 646; goulburnrosefestival.org.au***

PHOTOGRAPHY **SHARYN CAIRNS** COMPILED BY **LEAH TWOMEY** PLEASE SEND YOUR EVENT NEWS TO AUSTCOUNTRYSTYLE@NEWS.COM.AU EVENTS MAY CHANGE AND WE RECOMMEND CONTACTING THE ORGANISERS TO CONFIRM DETAILS AND ENSURE AVAILABILITY.

DIGNITY IN THE DOING

IF YOU HAVE ANY ARTISTIC DESIRES AT ALL, WRITES ANNABELLE HICKSON, NEVER BE AFRAID TO TRY.



"I AM TIRED OF THE NOTION THAT YOU HAVE TO SELL X AMOUNTS OF PAINTINGS FOR X AMOUNT OF DOLLARS TO CALL YOURSELF AN ARTIST."

A FEW YEARS ago, I completed a week-long pottery course at the National Art School in Sydney. I can barely distinguish the five days from each other. I was lost in a tactile world of pottery wheels spinning and wet clay forming. I can't remember thinking of anything, really. I was just doing.

At the end, all I had to show for it was a bunch of bowls, but the experience was soul-enriching. I felt completely inspired, energised and more settled than I had been for quite some time. It was as if the voice in my head had shut up long enough for my body to remember that everything was okay.

For me, art happens when you are in that space above the chitter-chatter in your head. Just being in that space is valuable. It is restorative, even if nothing particularly good is created. When I give myself time to concentrate on writing or to take photographs or to make something pretty out of some branches, I am opening myself up to art. For that time I am an artist, regardless of the outcome.

I am tired of the notion that you have to sell X amounts of paintings for X amount of dollars to call yourself an artist. You do not need to be particularly good at it. You do not need to be able to make money from it. In order to create art, all that matters is that you believe creating is a worthwhile thing to be doing — not for the end result, but for the doing itself. That there is dignity in the doing. Sometimes in that doing, magical and almost mysterious ideas will appear, other times they won't.

Some people are very good at what they do when they are in that space — like the artists featured in this issue — and I am glad they have shared their work with a world outside their own. But even if your results are less pleasing or less popular, there is still value in time spent creating.

There are so many gems in Elizabeth Gilbert's book on creativity, *Big Magic* (Bolinda Publishing, $49.95), and so you must read it anyway. But one of my favourite pieces of wisdom from Elizabeth goes like this — "If I am not actively creating something, then I am probably actively destroying something."

I felt like I had been kicked in the stomach when I read that line. I realised that art is not only something I wanted to do sometimes, but something I had to do. Even if I never sell a ceramic bowl, or a wreath or a photograph or a short story. Even if no-one ever reads, sees or cares about my work, even if my only Instagram follower is my mother, it actually doesn't matter. The process of working creatively is more than beneficial... it is essential.

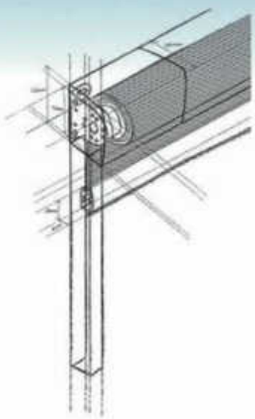
If this is ringing any bells for you, I urge you to make the time for creative endeavours. Any creative endeavours — singing Creedence Clearwater Revival *a cappella*, nude self-portraits while the kids are at school, trying to capture the fragility of life via wilting peonies on your iPhone camera. Whatever. It is all dignified. It is all worthy.

Throw all your perfectionist-leaning, result-driven expectations in the rubbish bin and enjoy the artistic ride, because there is a seat on that roller-coaster for all of us.

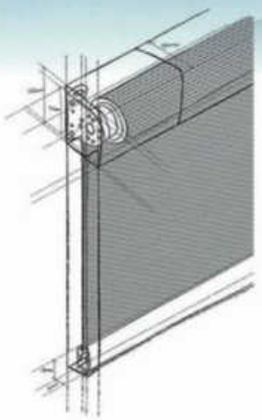
PHOTOGRAPHY **KARA ROSENLUND**



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FROM LEFT Young Sally loved to put on her favourite wetsuit and go bodyboarding; aged 11 and getting ready for her first contest, the Rusty Gromfest at Lennox Head, NSW.

SALLY FITZGIBBONS

PROFESSIONAL SURFER

THE WORLD SURF LEAGUE STAR TELLS CLAIRE MACTAGGART HOW HER COASTAL UPBRINGING WITH THREE OLDER BROTHERS HELPED HER BECOME A CHAMPION.

A delayed swell at Hawaii's Honolua Bay turns out to be a lucky break for *Country Style* as we catch up with Sally Fitzgibbons, waiting to compete in the Target Maui Pro, the last event of the women's 2015 championship tour. (She would go on to make the final, losing to Hawaii's Carissa Moore.)

The 25-year-old, ranked number three in the world, is positive and focused, using the time to train on the other side of the island. "We're making the most of it," says Sally of the delay. "I've grown up with other traditional sports where you show up and run at a certain time — whereas this sport throws everything out the window!"

Sally has finished in the top five for the past seven years, but surfing is only one of many sports she has excelled in. While growing up in Gerroa on the south coast of NSW, she competed at state and national levels in athletics, touch football, cross-country running and soccer, and won gold at the Australian Youth Olympic Festival in both the 800m and 1500m races. At 14, she became the youngest surfer to win an Association of Surfing Professionals (now the World Surf League) Pro Junior under 21 event, and in 2009 she joined the world surfing tour.

Sibling rivalry fuelled her competitive spirit. The youngest child of Martin and Mary Fitzgibbons, both teachers, Sally has three older brothers — Russell, 33, Ashley, 28, and Simon, 26. "The boys had that 'tough love' mentality," Sally says. "Whatever game we played, I'd get minimal instructions and away we'd go! I was always the one who lost but that just made me hungrier and hungrier to want to follow in their footsteps, whether it was surfing, soccer or touch football."

The small coastal town of Gerroa, with its sweeping beaches and neighbouring national park, was a picturesque backdrop to her childhood ambition. "As a young kid aspiring to achieve a dream of an Olympic gold medal and world championship, I had countless options and places to train," Sally says. "I was a bit of a DIY athlete — I didn't have fancy academies or gyms when I was super-young."

One of sport's most popular and positive role models, Sally's healthy lifestyle is chronicled in her book, *Live Like Sally*. There were many memorable moments in 2015 — in June she won the Fiji Women's Pro despite sustaining a perforated eardrum in the second round. Then in November, Sally and her partner, Penrith Panthers NRL player Trent Merrin, announced their engagement. "It's a really cool time in my life," she says. "I'm still on a high."

In December last year, she launched the Sally Fitzgibbons Foundation, with the aim of inspiring young people and targeting childhood obesity. "I want to reach out and help people along the way," Sally says. "Surfing, and the desire to win the world title, will always be there, but I don't want to finish my career and go, 'Oh well, that's done.' I want to use the opportunity to pass on the values that I've been taught and see people active, healthy and living life to the fullest."

Her family and the small community are by her side. "Gerroa is home and it always will be," she says.

Visit sallyfitzgibbons.com

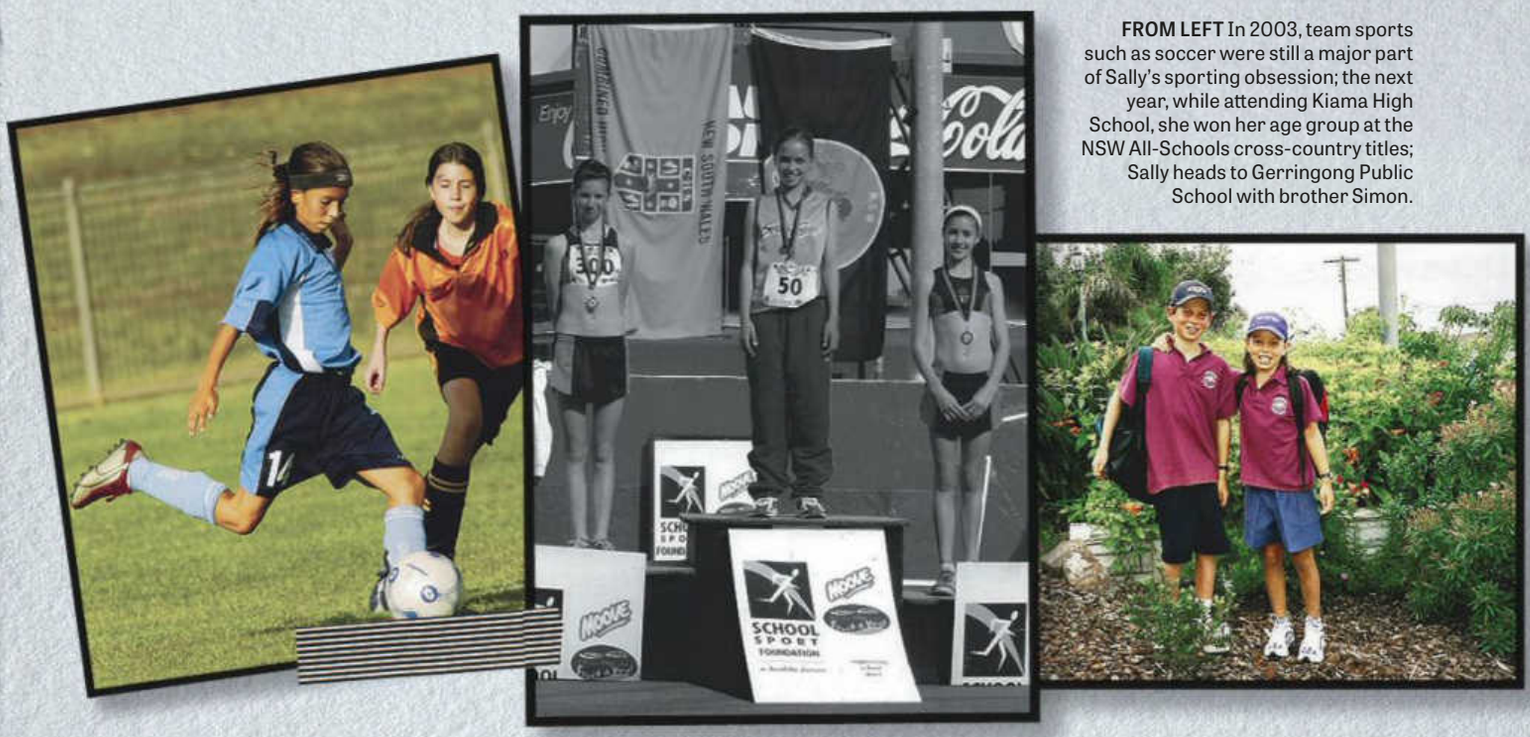
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH **TREVOR KING @ DLM** BACKGROUND PHOTOGRAPHY **SAM McADAM-COOPER** STYLING **PHOEBE McEVOY**



I GREW UP in Gerroa, which is a quaint coastal town of about 500 people. The town was sleepy through winter and came active and alive through summer — it's a bit of a holiday destination these days.

It was a neat spot to grow up because I had all these open spaces and we were blessed to be able to wake up and check the surf from our front window. We could see all the way along Seven Mile Beach, and on the other side of that was a national park and rolling hills — it's stunning. There are paddocks with cows 50 metres from where you surf.

We lived right on the headland and spent long days at the beach. I remember having a fluoro-green wetsuit and we'd go to the beach with our boogie boards. >



FROM LEFT In 2003, team sports such as soccer were still a major part of Sally's sporting obsession; the next year, while attending Kiama High School, she won her age group at the NSW All-Schools cross-country titles; Sally heads to Gerringong Public School with brother Simon.

We'd run around, jump off the rocks and skim our boards along the shore. With a big blanket or beach towels and a box of biscuits, we were set for the day and we'd come home at dark, exhausted.

I was a bit of a tomboy and people would come up to Mum and say, 'You have four beautiful boys!' I was always really determined — it didn't matter at what. I was very goal-oriented and wanted to get the best out of myself, whether at school or sport.

I am so thankful for having family support. Whatever I tried, whatever permission slip I brought home, Mum and Dad were okay with it. Obviously there was a cost. Representing your region and state and country doesn't come cheap, but they said, 'We'll find a way to do this.' They encouraged me to keep excelling at everything I could.

I'm proud of how I've shaped myself as a person out of what they taught me. That's why I try and give back, especially to Mum and Dad. I don't want to take back a picture. I want to take them along for the ride as they sacrificed so much to bring me up.

Team sports were the first to phase out because I started to travel with my surfing from the age of 14. Then I transitioned to my individual sports — middle-distance running and surfing. It was a two-horse race when I was about 16. I loved both sports but knew that to get to the elite level and become the best in the world, I had to focus my energy. I gravitated to surfing and could see the pathway to the top. It fed the competitive desires. The surfaces are uncontrollable and the waves are different every day. At a young age I was seeing the world and doing something that I love.

School really taught me my work ethic. As I took everything on, it had to be like clockwork and that set me up. However, high school was not easy. I was spending time away to chase my sporting dreams and I'd come back and the friend groups would have changed.

I didn't drink alcohol and things like that, which I thought was a simple lifestyle decision — but it became a big thing when everyone was talking about the next party. I wondered why it wasn't cool to stand up and say no to a drink.

I am so proud of my younger self to push through those awkward moments of growing and yet still be the best I can be. There were definitely tears, but I'm not afraid to say to the next generation coming through, 'Hey, school is tough — you are all put together in one place and expected to get along and compete. It's just a little blip, so be the person you want to be... start now.'

I think I was born to test myself. Behind the scenes, the bit that makes you a true champion is when no-one is watching. It's 4.30am and it's raining, and you're running the streets or you're in the gym or the surf. There's something in me that says, 'Well, this is what I'm up against. I can find a way.'

Surfing is a spiritual experience. When the cameras and the people on the beach are gone, it's just you and the ocean and it's really pure.



GERROA A popular holiday destination, Gerroa is a small seaside village 133 kilometres south of Sydney. It sits above the mouth of Crooked River at the northern end of Seven Mile Beach, a favoured spot for fishing, swimming, surfing and kayaking. Sir Charles Kingsford Smith launched the historic commercial flight from Seven Mile Beach to New Zealand in 1933, and his memorial lookout at the town's entrance has views of the coastline and Seven Mile Beach National Park. The park has an impressive sand dune system that supports an array of wildlife. A great display of fossils is found at Black Head, at the tip of Gerroa's headland, and is believed to date back 250–300 million years.

GERROA PHOTOGRAPH **VISITNSW.COM**

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AS LIONS CLUBS TURN 100, EDUCATOR NORMA INGRAM IS LIVING PROOF OF THEIR MESSAGE OF SUPPORT FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS.

WORDS **CATHERINE McCORMACK** PHOTOGRAPHY **MICHAEL WEE**

LIKE MANY PEOPLE, Norma Ingram carries a permanent reminder of the excitement and daring of childhood. The scar — a large one, on her leg — dates back to the early 1950s, when the 67-year-old former regional chairperson of the Lions Club and now-executive director of the National Aboriginal College (NAC) almost drowned in the Lachlan River at Cowra in the NSW central west.

"The water was beautiful and, as kids, that's where we spent our time," says Norma, a Wiradjuri woman who spent her early years on the Erambie Aboriginal Reserve outside Cowra. "We were playing in one of the rough little boats the boys had made. It was made of tin roofing, which would lift off sometimes when it was stormy, and the boys would collect it, pull the ends together and do them up with tar. I nearly died in one of those boats! But it was so much fun."

The youngest of 11 children, Norma remembers a childhood filled with play and freedom. This despite the violent, cruel history of the Wiradjuri people, who suffered dispossession of their land and genocide shortly after European settlement in 1824. "We didn't have toys or computers or televisions — all those distractions young people have today," says Norma, recalling life on Erambie, which was first established as a mission in 1890. "It was kind of like this wonderful, free life spent with family. We almost felt protected, maybe because we were a little bit isolated and we had all our cousins and extended relatives and friends."

> "As Australians, we all have to work together."

Norma's days were spent by the river or playing games such as rounders and hopscotch. The children devised their own language — a combination of English and Wiradjuri, nods and winks — and waited for the call at sundown that it was time to come home. "Playing together and having that family attention and connectedness was very powerful," she says.

Today, the accomplished educator and executive, who addressed the Lions International Conference in 2010, spends most of her time in Redfern in inner-city Sydney, where she promotes education and Aboriginal issues, and achieves positive and lasting outcomes for her community.

Most recently, Norma launched the National Aboriginal College, an online education provider that offers diploma and certificate courses in business, management, work health and safety, and training and assessment. The school also aims to foster a better understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and traditions, with courses available to anyone living in NSW, Queensland, Victoria and the ACT. "Everybody in Australia should know about Aboriginal history and culture — it's a very important part of who we are," Norma says. "When they teach Australian history, they start from 1788 and the arrival of Arthur Phillip — but I say, because I also do a lot of Aboriginal 'Welcome to Country', that Australian history started at the Dreamtime.

"It's a privilege for us to trace our history back to the Dreamtime. Once a person starts thinking about and owning that, they start to value our country in a different way."

Education has always been at the heart of Norma's life. Her love for learning was passed on from her mother, who was a strong advocate for school and the right to vote.

"My mother was extremely influential," she says. "Because I was the baby, she took me everywhere with her. My father was a shearer and away a lot. All 11 of us children were to the same father so we lived under the Aboriginal welfare act. My mother was very protective and she was very strict."

Housing on the reserve was basic. The fibro buildings had three bedrooms, with a kitchen and verandah at one end, and a laundry and two washtubs at the other. The shower ran cold, and the children would build a fire under the copper stove to heat any water to wash.

With their father away so often, Norma's mother moved them to Sydney and, at age 11, the stark contrast of life in a big city left Norma feeling homesick and anxious at times. As the only Indigenous kid in her class at school, she remembers sitting up the back and hoping no-one would pay her any attention. "I was so shy! But I knew all the answers and I loved school," she says.

Norma went on to teachers' college, to study history and English, before having her three children, Lisa, Lyndsay and Kalmain, now all in their forties. In the late 1970s, spurred on by Indigenous activists such as Charles Perkins and Gary Foley, she decided to study law. (In 1965, Perkins had led the Aboriginal Freedom Ride, which drew attention to racism and the poor living conditions of Indigenous people in regional NSW, while Foley played a key role in establishing Canberra's Aboriginal Tent Embassy in 1972.)

Soon after that, a chat with poet, author and Aboriginal campaigner Roberta Sykes saw Norma become one of the first Indigenous Australians ever to study and graduate from Harvard University in the USA. "It was a wonderful experience and it was a hard experience," says Norma >



AGE-OLD WISDOM IN THE MODERN WORLD

Norma outlines some of the key Aboriginal philosophies guiding her work and understanding.

On Indigenous issues: "I want all Australians to be aware of our historical fights, to ensure our rightful place as the oldest continually practiced culture on the planet. First Australians have the strength of our ancient culture to help us survive and flourish today, and we want to share this with the wider Australian community."

On education: "Education is not just reading and writing, or sitting behind a desk in your classroom. Education is continuous teaching and learning, so there has to be an effort from everybody. Aboriginal people have to believe in the system, and the system has to be made relevant to people as well. I'm a big believer in partnership. As Australians, we all have to work together. Work together, walk together."

On caring for the land: "When people talk about this country, I hear many Aboriginal people say 'Mother Earth' and I hear many other Australians say 'the land' — there is a big difference. A *big* difference. We all love this land, we all love this country, but two of the major parts of Aboriginal culture are reciprocity and kinship — Mother Earth looks after us all. So, if we can get all Australians saying 'Mother Earth' instead of 'the land', then we will understand that the land is not just there for us to reap."

Norma Ingram outside the Wyanga Aboriginal Aged Care Program's base in Sydney's Redfern.



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Norma's career has been dedicated to Aboriginal education and welfare; the Redfern building where the Wyanga Aboriginal Aged Care Program is based; a mural painted on an exterior wall by Danny Strachan is a reproduction of *Mission boy dreams*, an etching by Roy Kennedy.

of gaining her master's degree in education in 1985. "Here I was, this little Aboriginal girl off the reserve, going to this big place that was on the moon — well, it was the moon to me, anyway! And, as one of the very first Aboriginal people to go to Harvard, I could not fail. I had to achieve."

With no scholarship to pay her way, Norma relied on fundraising by the Black Women's Action Group. For pocket money, she worked shifts on the dormitory reception and typed up other students' assignments. Aside from one week over Christmas when she caught the train to New York, 330 kilometres away, Norma's 12 months at Harvard centred around the library, her studies and Sunday morning mass at a little white church that had a plaque stating that George Washington and his wife Martha once prayed there.

In the years since, Norma has built a notable career in the public and private sectors. There have been positions with Qantas, TAFE NSW and the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, as well as roles with the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, the Indigenous Land Corporation, the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office and the City of Sydney Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group.

She is also a governing committee member of the Wyanga Aboriginal Aged Care Program, which last year celebrated 10 years servicing the Redfern community from its current premises. "We've run this organisation for 20 years but a decade ago we were able to get government funding to buy the building," Norma says.

Launching the National Aboriginal College, whose office is also in the Wyanga building, is a dream come true. In the short term, Norma's goal is for it to become a registered training organisation — currently, courses are offered in partnership with the Gold Coast Training College — with a greater range of courses and total influence over its subjects. "I guess I've always been driven, I've always been involved in Aboriginal affairs and working for the community," she says. "What I say is, when a door opens, you step into it. If you don't like it, you can always walk out."

This motto led Norma, in the late 1990s, to start the first Lions Club in the Redfern/Waterloo area of Sydney. She acted as its chair for around five years, and its operating model continues to inspire. "What I love about Lions is that they don't take any percentage at all from any publicly raised funds to pay for the admin," she says. "Everyone is a volunteer and it's entirely up to you as a club how you support the community with the money you raise."

With plans to one day retire and find a little place back in Cowra, Norma reckons the Club may even offer her an opportunity to reconnect with her birthplace. "I'll probably join the local Lions Club — or start one up if they don't have one!" she says with a laugh. "Even though most of my family have lived in Sydney most of our lives, when we talk about Cowra, we still refer to it as home. It's the traditional land of my mother's mother. When I retire — when I go — that's where I'm going to be buried, in Cowra. That's where I want to be. That's where my spiritual connections are. That's where I feel safe and serene."

To find out more about the National Aboriginal College, call 1300 865 665; nac.edu.au. For more about Lions Australia, call (02) 4940 8033; lionsclubs.org.au. Love to win $1000 to help your community? Join the Lions Club Community 100 project, details opposite.

ABOUT COWRA

Located on the banks of the Lachlan River, Cowra is known as the crossroads of the NSW central west and is one of 10 towns and villages that make up the broader Cowra region. Since European settlement in the late 1820s, the area has been a strong agricultural centre, with a landscape that takes in alluvial plains, rolling hills and some wilderness areas.

In more recent times Cowra, which has a population of more than 12,500, has gained a reputation as a hub for manufacturing and health care. It's also an award-winning wine-producing area, known for its chardonnay.

During World War II, Japanese prisoners of war were held in a local internment camp and their bid to escape in 1944 is part of the town's military history. The Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre is a well-known landmark.

The history of Cowra's Indigenous population has also been marked by violence. In 1824 the Wiradjuri people, led by their chief Windradyne, declared war on European settlers, but they suffered genocide and dispossession. Since then, the Aboriginal community in the region has continued its proud history of activism and survival.





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COMMUNITY 100

YOUR CAUSE, YOUR COUNTRY'S FUTURE

To celebrate the Lions Clubs International centennial, Lions Clubs throughout Australia are giving away more than $100,000 to over 100 local community projects in 2016!

Whether it's a community garden, kids' playground or just someone who needs a hand, all project ideas are welcome. "If you can think of a community need, chances are there's a Lions Club doing something about it," says Rob Oerlemans, Lions' executive officer. "This program will reach out to our communities and create new partnerships."

There are over 100 Lions Clubs participating in this grants program. To find out if your project is eligible, visit homelife.com.au/terms for full terms and conditions. You have until June 30, 2016, to apply for a $1000 grant to help you develop a project in your community. To apply, we need a short submission from you that includes:

1 An outline of the project for which funding is being sought, the community which will benefit and details of how the community will benefit.
2 Proposed timing of the project.
3 Total cost of the project.

Visit homelife.com.au or mail your application to Lions Community 100, *Country Style,* Locked Bag 5030, Alexandria, NSW 2015.

Applications open at 00:01 AEDT on 25.02.2016 and close at 23:59 AEST on 30.06.2016. Grant recipients will be determined at 10:00 AEST on 30.09.2016 at Level 1, 2 Holt Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010. Grant recipients will be announced and their names published on homelife.com.au on 04.10.2016. Full terms and conditions and eligibility restrictions apply, visit homelife.com.au/terms











PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES

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Like

the art issue

This month, we celebrate the creative talent living and working in rural Australia. We visit top regional galleries, talk to leading painters about their connection to the land, peek inside artists' homes, and take a colourful approach to decorating with the latest paint and fabrics.



BACKGROUND FABRICS IN STUDIO Carleton V 'Puff' **fabric** in Lapis Berry (left), POA, and Sequana 'Petals' **fabric** in Autumn (right), POA, both from Tigger Hall Design. *Threads and Seams of the White Desert* **artwork** by Jo Bertini (on easel), $6000, from MARS Gallery. **For full stockist details, see page 143.**

PHOTOGRAPHY **LISA COHEN**
STYLING **TESS NEWMAN-MORRIS**

Alison Fraser's artwork is displayed throughout her family's house. The master bedroom features two of her cyanotype works — an 1800s photographic printing process which results in ghost-like images on heavyweight paper of old clothes such as wedding dress petticoats and christening dresses. Alison sells her hand-dyed textiles and, **FACING PAGE**, range of ceramics under the name Slab + Slub. She is currently working on a series of blue ceramic bottles.

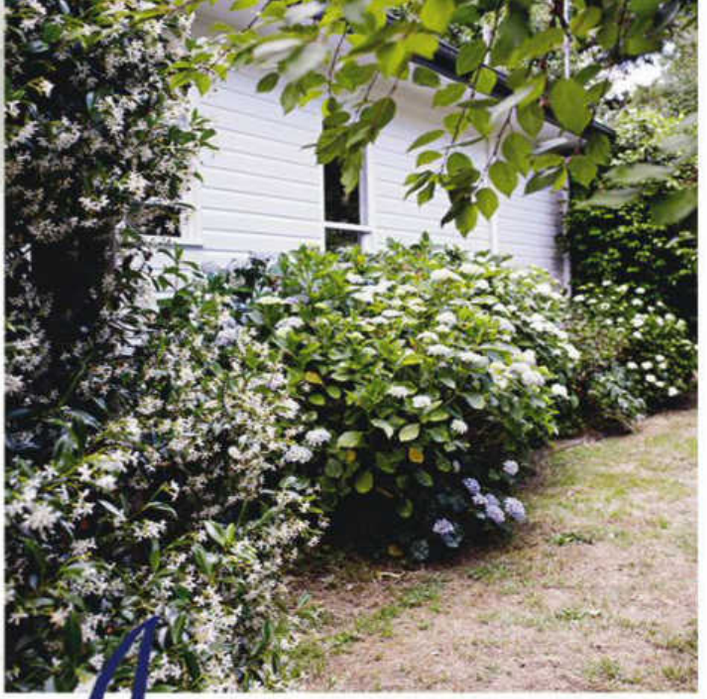
creative thinking

THE NSW SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS COTTAGE OF ARTIST AND CERAMICIST ALISON FRASER IS A TRIBUTE TO HER CREATIVITY.

WORDS **ANNABELLE HICKSON** PHOTOGRAPHY **PRUE RUSCOE**
ART DIRECTION **SHARON MISKO** STYLING ASSISTANT **ANNA DELPRAT**









CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE LEFT Alison, husband Andrew and sons Fraser (left) and Hugo; their home is located close enough to Sydney for Andrew's work; Daisy the dog in the living room; tools of the artist. **FACING PAGE** The marble-topped dining table and cupboard were bought at Sydney auction house Raffan, Kelaher & Thomas, while the timber and steel side table is from Dirty Janes in Bowral. Alison and Andrew sanded the cottage's floorboards and then limewashed them, and she made the curtains. "I prowled a local fabric store's remnants table for scraps to use and found a heap of sheer pure linens." **For stockist details, see page 143.**



Art is important to Alison Fraser for many reasons. It keeps her sane, it helps her express her love of her family and friends and, in recent times, it has helped open the door to a whole new community.

Four years ago, Alison — a former graphic designer now widely known for her wabi-sabi hand-built ceramics — and her husband Andrew started toying with the idea of selling their terrace house in Sydney and moving to the country. Keen to free themselves from their inner-city mortgage and dreaming of clean air and open spaces for their sons Hugo, now eight, and Fraser, six, they had an "epiphany moment" on a trip to the Southern Highlands at the Burrawang pub.

"It's a beautiful old red building covered in Boston ivy, with a terrace out the back which rolls into a paddock," Alison says. "We had lunch there and the boys walked out and just kept going. They were two and three at the time and they just ran. It was like watching dogs on the beach."

One year ago, the family farewelled the city and moved into a light-filled weatherboard house on two hectares some 10 kilometres out of Bowral, surrounded by roses, hydrangeas and a garage just waiting to be turned into a ceramics studio.

After a renovation that involved a lot of white paint and removing the living-room ceiling to expose the beams and joists, they moved in. The rooms are filled with plants, art and handmade objects, and all look out to the lush garden. The garage, which now has a concrete floor, custom benches, a sink and a wall of French doors, has become a dream studio.

"It's a fairly radical decision to move to the country when you have lived all your life in cities," Alison says.

The clincher — apart from the landscape and the train line, which means Andrew can commute to his job in finance in Sydney, where he spends three nights a week — was nearby Sturt craft centre, Australia's oldest craft centre.

"Because of Sturt, I knew I could step into a network of my own without relying on the kids and their school," Alison says. "You have to think about yourself, especially if you won't be working full-time, and what your network is going to be.

"I remember something (writer) Colleen McCullough said when she moved to Norfolk Island, which was, 'Don't expect people to reach out to you as the new person. You have to do the reaching-out.' I took that on board." >



about the house...

* Alison sewed the cushion covers for the pillows on the sofas and also made the airy curtains in the living room from remnants of sheer linen found at her local fabric shop. "I cut them roughly and sewed them together, with no hems," she says. "I love raw cut, frayed edges."
* Alison and Andrew sanded the floorboards and used FeastWatson Stain & Varnish Liming in white to limewash them. 1800 252 502; feastwatson.com.au
* The 'Nipprig' pendant light in the living room was from Ikea. This style is no longer available in Australia but the 'Böja' is similar; ikea.com.au
* On the master bed is a patchwork linen throw inspired by spring — the first of a to-be-completed series of four, one for each season. For the spring piece, Alison used patches of fabric from dresses and material belonging to the women in her family — her grandmother, mother, sister and herself. Because of the personal stories stitched into the throw, she realises she could never sell it. "There is memory imbued into the cloth," she says.

Comfortable living-room sofas in neutral tones are stacked with cushions. Alison and Andrew painted their weatherboard house an untinted white inside and out — the interior required four coats. Their renovation also involved removing the ceiling to expose beams and joists. Alison made the coffee table from second-hand materials. **FACING PAGE** *Japanese vase and open roses*, a painting by NSW artist Matilda Julian, sits on top of a cabinet Alison found at Black Sheep in Bowral. The ceramics are all Alison's apart from the chair by NSW central coast ceramic artist Keiko Matsui.

"There are too many things I want to try and ideas I want to express."









CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE LEFT Alison with Daisy in her studio. "It is my space," she says. "Every space I had before had to be shared with guests or food"; plenty of shade means an ideal outdoor entertaining area; the living room vignette is made up of (clockwise, from bottom left) some of Alison's cyanotype works, a landscape by artist Susan Robertson, circular overstitched fabric pieces from Planet, still-life bottle paintings by her friend Gillian Johnston and a "love ghost" Alison gave to Andrew. The portrait was a vintage find; the boys at play; more of her ceramics. **FACING PAGE** Their cottage sits on two hectares, in a bucolic setting that's a far cry from the family's former Sydney terrace. **For stockist details, see page 143.**





Alison enrolled in a five-day ceramics course at Sturt. She then exhibited at Burrawang's DnA design festival, where she met other makers including textile artist Natalie Miller and weavers Harriet Goodall and Brooke Munro. And along with Instagram, which played a "massive" role in helping to establish a local network, she found herself surrounded by a talented pool of crafters, artists and artisans.

In this new rural context, Alison is focused on her art. She jumps between disciplines including ceramics, textiles and cyanotype photography to explore the many ideas swirling in her head. "There are too many things I want to try and ideas I want to express," she says. "I cannot stick to one."

Alison sells her ceramics — vases, vessels, plates and platters — and her hand-dyed textiles and linen patchwork throws under the name Slab + Slub. The 'Slab' comes from the pottery technique she uses to hand-build pieces cut from slab-rolled lengths of clay (rather than a wheel), while the 'Slub' refers to the small knots found on the pieces of linen fragments she uses in her textile art.

What started as a desire to eat off something she made herself and share with her family was hijacked by the public demand for her tableware and linens. "The plate-making was meant to be a gift to my family, a private act," Alison says. "The original point of this stuff was that it was made to be given. It wasn't meant to be made and sold."

Her love of handmade and her creative ability came from her mother. "Growing up, she made all our clothes," Alison recalls. "I look back and see that as an act of love. She could have bought them." Because of her mother's approach, the act of making is second nature. "It is my norm... I actually get to a level of depression without art," she says. "It is my sanity."

Having happily settled into rural life, Alison is intent on creating what British artist Grayson Perry has described as "an exceptional thing", or the ultimate. Who knows what it will be — but it's sure to be thoughtful, thought-provoking and a thing of beauty, much like the artist herself. CS

Visit slabandslub.com.au. Alison also stocks at limited outlets, including Small Spaces in Sydney; small-spaces.com.au and Mr Kitly in Melbourne; mrkitly.com.au





Nick Osmond's Moree home is filled with art. In the sitting room, it includes (clockwise, from top left) a painting by Moree artist George See, an old Chinese advertising poster and Nick's *Anita Lane*. Behind Nick's dog Tally in the studio is his painting of his father Bruce Osmond and a banner from a tourist shop in China. **FACING PAGE** Nick wipes his brushes on this old curtain while painting.



new horizons

ARTIST NICK OSMOND'S UNIQUE SURROUNDINGS HELP TO HEAL HIS BODY AND NOURISH HIS SOUL.

WORDS AND STYLING **ANNABELLE HICKSON** PHOTOGRAPHY **KARA ROSENLUND**

“I just started painting for something to do when I couldn’t walk.”



Daughter Sophie keeps Nick company in his studio while he works on a new piece, *Where I’m From*. **FACING PAGE** Garden colour matches the green-themed dining room; on its walls are Nick’s paintings (from top) *I Feel Safe with Old People*, *My First Tattoo* and *Mother and Daughter*. Beneath a print by Sydney photographer John Williams in the studio are (clockwise, from top) Nick’s *Moree Boomerangs*, *Getting Ready for a Night Out in London* and *Neal Cassady and Jack Kerouac*.



The motivation for Nick Osmond to begin painting was a moment of lightbulb-like clarity, but not in the circumstances you might expect. In his case, it was due to physical pain. Having suffered two snapped Achilles tendons — the first while playing tennis, the second at work — and three months of being unable to walk as he recuperated, the gardener listened to what his body was trying to say. And that was... "Paint".

"It was like magic," recalls Nick, now 48, of that moment a couple of years ago. "I just started painting for something to do when I couldn't walk. You almost have to be in the situation to appreciate how useless you feel when you can't walk. I had an immediate connection with colour."

Before long, Nick was convalescing in his weatherboard cottage by the Broadwater Creek, on the outskirts of Moree in north-west NSW — with his Rhodesian ridgebacks, Tally and Pearl, for company, listening to hour after hour of Radio National and painting almost every day.

"Everybody who is curious and wants to communicate and delve into things has the potential to make art, and that underlying intent in me finally got to live," he says. "It is just a shame I had to wait so long, until I was almost 50. If I had started in my teens, everything would've made more sense!"

Nick, who still modestly describes himself as a gardener who paints, reflects on the incomplete arts and ceramics courses he has taken in the past. "It just didn't click," he says. "I dropped out. I couldn't relate at all to doing something creative in a classroom situation."

Now back to full physical health, he has established a routine of waking up early, putting in a full shift on whatever garden he's working on and then picking up his daughter Sophie, 12, from school. Nick then spends the afternoon with her until she goes back to her mother's house, a couple of blocks away, in the evening. After that, he works on his paintings until late into the night, with the doors flung open out onto his garden.

"There is a real sense of peace and beauty at that time," he says. "It is really sweet. My neighbours like to stay up late as well, and I can hear constant chatting, laughter and the sounds of the radio as I paint. The day is very physical and the night is more mental, more emotional."

Nick feels settled in his pre-World War I cottage, which he moved into almost three years ago, but the smaller space is in contrast to his upbringing. He grew up on a 12,500-hectare sheep station near Mungindi, a 90-minute drive north-west of Moree, living with his parents and three brothers in an enormous, rambling homestead. "I loved to move around even then," he recalls. "The house had something like 12 bedrooms and I lived in all but one of them."

Nick went to boarding school in Mungindi when he was seven, then boarded in Lismore before moving to Sydney to study Greek and Roman literature. He had no plans to return to the country — but when he was diagnosed with cancer, he moved to Moree to be near his parents, who had relocated into town during a bad drought. "It was not the plan but I needed the support," he says. >





"Everybody who is curious and wants to communicate and delve into things has the potential to make art."

A grand fireplace in the studio is adorned by flowers from Nick's garden and a glimpse of his artwork *The Only Way to Wear Fur*. His *Mother and Daughter* guards the doorway to the dining room. **FACING PAGE** Nick clearly has a green thumb, as the cascade over the mantelpiece of crepe myrtle, geraniums, plumbago, roses, salvias and maidenhair vine proves.



FROM LEFT Another display shows the artist's talent at his 'day job'; a native mistletoe hangs from the window in the dining room, while some of Nick's collection of cacti and succulents are on the table. **FACING PAGE** Outside, a small-leafed creeping fig envelops the garden shed, with chilli plants, pawpaw, roses and crepe myrtles in the foreground.

Nick recovered from the cancer, married and started gardening. "I tried so many other jobs," he says. "Graduates from Sydney University like me either become prime ministers, lawyers or doctors, or they work in second-hand bookshops and drive cabs. You could probably add gardening to that. I don't think you actually choose to become a gardener. You are born that way, born to push a barrow.

"You accept your lot and that is extremely powerful. And then you get the payoff, in regards to you becoming aware of using your hands all the time and your body becoming stronger. You also develop a close relationship with the people you work for, and their gardens. If you didn't value that, you wouldn't go and weed for five hours straight."

Nick's own garden is like a dream. Vibrant crepe myrtles erupt out of clouds of salvias and roses. There is very little lawn, with masses of flowers and foliage crowding over the winding gravel pathways. Not being one to do things by halves, he has planted a line of five Queensland bottle trees in a "not large" space on the side of his house.

"My garden has gotten to where I wanted it to go, and done it so quickly," he says. "That is probably an explanation of paradise — when there is a sense of unity and connection and one-ness, when you don't notice individual plants and instead it is one big plant wrapping around the house. Before that stage, the garden is very much you and the effort you put into it, but once it flicks over and becomes 'one', the plants really seem like they are on their own. That is exciting." CS

View Nick's work on Instagram, @nicholasosmond.

about the house...

* Nick's must-read is *Derek Jarman's Garden*, a book by the late English filmmaker, artist and gardener who, against all odds, created a beautiful garden on the bleak shingle shore near a nuclear power station on the coast of Kent. Like Derek Jarman, Nick feels gardening is "an attempt to re-create paradise".
* When Nick moved in, he decided to keep the formal living and dining room in the centre of the house completely empty. But as painting took over his life, this large space has become his studio.
* The furniture in Nick's house is a collection of old pieces which he has either been given or collected over the years. For example, he "pinched" the bentwood chairs around the dining table from his brother.
* He enjoys the sense of being 'at home' and loves sitting on an old chair in the sunroom. "You need to have a chair to go to every day, just to relax," Nick says. "It's a common leather lounge chair, crammed into a small room, and it's where I can read and unwind."





open for view

A DELIGHTFUL CENTURY-OLD COTTAGE IN NORTHERN NSW DOUBLES UP AS A GUESTHOUSE AND GALLERY.

WORDS **CATHERINE McCORMACK** PHOTOGRAPHY **ALICIA TAYLOR** STYLING **SHANNON FRICKE**



A canvas hammock welcomes you to this cottage-turned-art gallery. The cushions are from Walter G and the Beach People towel is from Ahoy Trader. **FACING PAGE** More colour comes in the shape of a striped 'Terra' plate by Shannon Fricke and a Walter G napkin. The ceramic serving vessel is by Paterson + Steele. **For stockist details, see page 143.**



ASK ANY ENTHUSIASTIC collector and they will tell you that art is often bought on instinct and emotion alone. At The Art House in Newrybar, a boutique accommodation and gallery space near Byron Bay on the NSW north coast, you also have the advantage of seeing what the artwork looks like when hung in a home.

The 100-year-old cottage was turned into a guesthouse and gallery a little over a year ago, having belonged to a local florist for 25 years. Once the manse of a church, the weatherboard house features original wooden floors, pretty fretwork details and a tiled front verandah.

The rear is a more recent extension, with a lounge and narrow kitchen opening onto a spacious dining room and timber deck overlooking the hinterland. "It's a beautiful old house with amazing views," says property manager Wendy Wishart, who moved here three years ago from Sydney, bringing with her a range of experience including time in art gallery administration. She's also an amateur painter.

To manage the collection and host the pop-up exhibitions, Wendy has worked closely with David Corazza, owner of nearby The Channon Gallery. "It's a great little space," says David, who curates the art. "As a gallery, it's a little different and less formal, although the art is no less important."

Past exhibitions have been inspired by the sea and artists working in the area — including Diana Miller, whose studio is down the road, within the Newrybar Merchants emporium opposite Harvest Café, the village's buzzy restaurant, deli and bakery. An upcoming exhibition will feature the work of artists in the Tweed region. Every piece is for sale and works that don't sell on the night often stay in the house.

"We try to have an exhibition every couple of months," Wendy says. "We usually ask people to pay at the door and the proceeds go to a local charity. Harvest Café do the food and we have Champagne. Last time we dragged all the furniture outside — it's always a fantastic party night."

The Art House is the perfect base from which to explore Newrybar and the wider region. "The people here are fantastic," Wendy says. "There's a real sense of community. Plus the Byron area is amazing. You can shop, go to the beaches and the galleries. It has it all." CS

The next exhibition opening at The Art House is on March 11. 5 Old Pacific Highway, Newrybar, NSW. 0402 930 467; the-arthouse.com.au





CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE
A 'Dreaming' quilt cover by Shannon Fricke continues the white theme in one of the cottage's two main bedrooms; if guests tire of the artwork on display they can enjoy views from the verandah; The Art House sits on nearly one hectare of land at one end of Newrybar's charming main street; *Wali* by indigenous painter Tommy Watson and a piece from Chinese artist Zhang Xiaogang's *Big Family* series overlook the living area. The custom surfboard was built and shaped by Chris Lorroway and Kramer Winchester, local builders who also replaced and restored the home's decorative fretwork. Wendy bought the leather lounge at Anibou and driftwood coffee table at Coco Republic. **FACING PAGE** Wendy is proud of the painting in the bedroom, *Luther*, which is of her German shepherd. "I paint for therapy more than anything!" she admits.
For stockist details, see page 143.







A wall in Lucy Culliton's studio displays a series of her paintings over the years. **FACING PAGE** White and pink lupins and pink roses populate one part of her extensive garden.



seeds of discovery

PAINTER LUCY CULLITON'S GARDEN IN NSW'S MONARO DISTRICT ALLOWS HER TO ESCAPE, ROLL UP HER SLEEVES AND BE INSPIRED.

WORDS **CHRISTINE REID** PHOTOGRAPHY **MICHAEL WEE**





A gentle rain falls softly but steadily on Lucy Culliton's garden. Under the misty sky, flower colours gain a new clarity — vivid reds and pinks, blues and yellows, look like floral traffic lights against the wet grass. In the damp air, clumps of white Shasta daisies illuminate the soft light.

This bright, joyful garden with its jewel-coloured flowers has been captured on canvas by Lucy, a highly regarded artist whose acute powers of observation have led to sell-out exhibitions in Sydney in recent years.

When the Art Gallery of New South Wales purchased one of her watercolours last year, the gallery remarked that "the recurring feature of her work is the arrangement of objects in still-life compositions... they also show the artist's love of flowers and her garden and her urge to collect particular objects... exuberant still-life paintings of objects and flowers (are) arranged in a multitude of combinations."

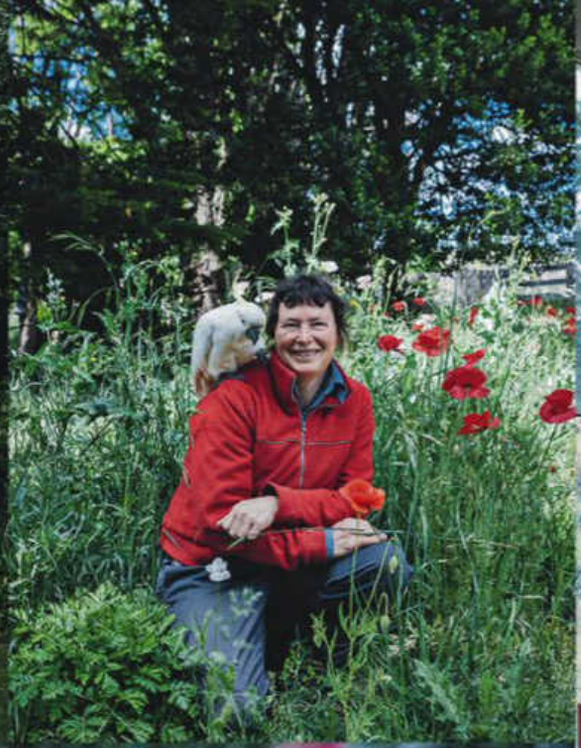
You might be tempted to think that Lucy's studio and garden are in reasonable proximity to Sydney's galleries — particularly The Hughes Gallery in Surry Hills, where she has exhibited for nearly 20 years. However, Lucy's garden — both a source of inspiration and recreation for her, — is quite some distance from the harbour city. It's located in the Monaro region of southern New South Wales, a good two-and-a-half-hours' drive south of Canberra.

Eight years ago, tired of inner-city life in Surry Hills where Lucy explains her studio became a "drop-in centre", she retreated to the tiny hamlet of Bibbenluke. She bought Bibbenluke Lodge, an intriguing house built in 1937 that is a quirky architectural mix of Art Deco meets Hollywood with a touch of Spanish Mission.

"The house hadn't been renovated so it's okay for me to walk in with muddy boots," she says. "The dogs can wander in and out and, plus it had a lovely large garden." Surrounding the garden is 25 hectares of farmland with some patches of native forest.

The entrance drive, framed by Monterey pines, forks into two — giving visitors a dilemma about which way to go. Head left and the driveway beside the Bombala River overlooks, as Lucy calls it, "the Jeffrey Smart bridge", a brutish concrete construction, referring to the late artist's unsentimental style, that replaced a historic timber bridge. >





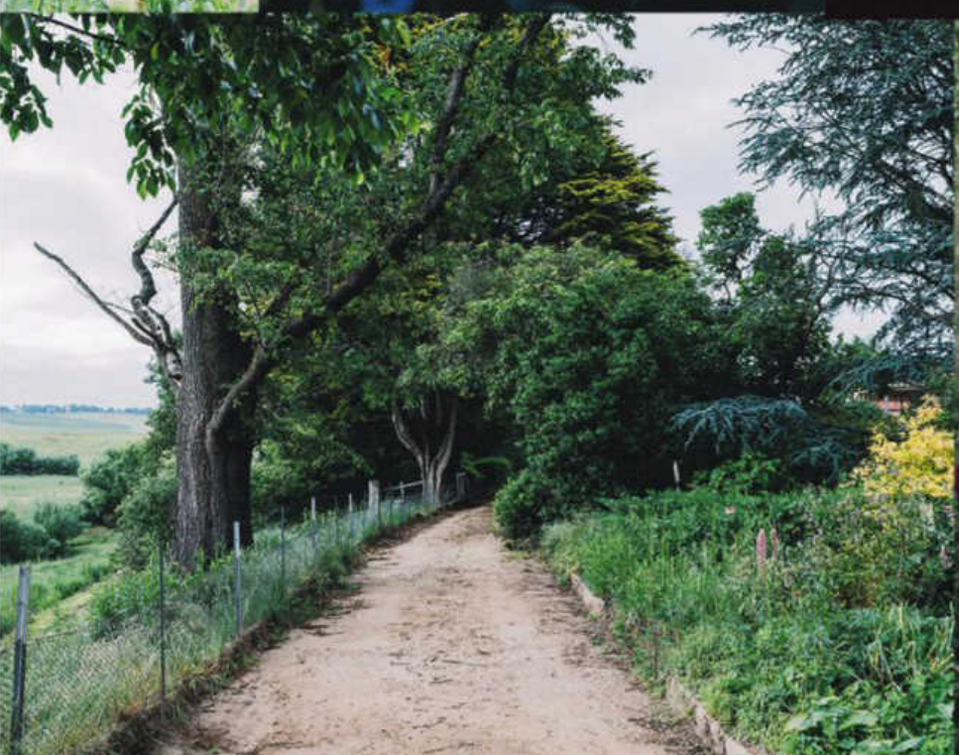






CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE Lucy with her pet cockatoo named Hello Cocky, one of her nine cockatoos. Lucy's menagerie also includes chickens, ducks, geese, guinea fowl, pigeons, horses, cows, sheep, goats, a pig, a galah and a magpie; unfinished artworks in Lucy's studio; peonies and poppies beside her four-bedroom house; the lower fork of the entrance drive leading to the house; a detail of a peony. **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP** The lodge played host to tourists in a former life, but Lucy now uses it as a home for her rescued animals and has no plans to resume running it as tourism accommodation; an old building on the property is "where the ducks sleep at night," she says. "A possum sleeps there too!"







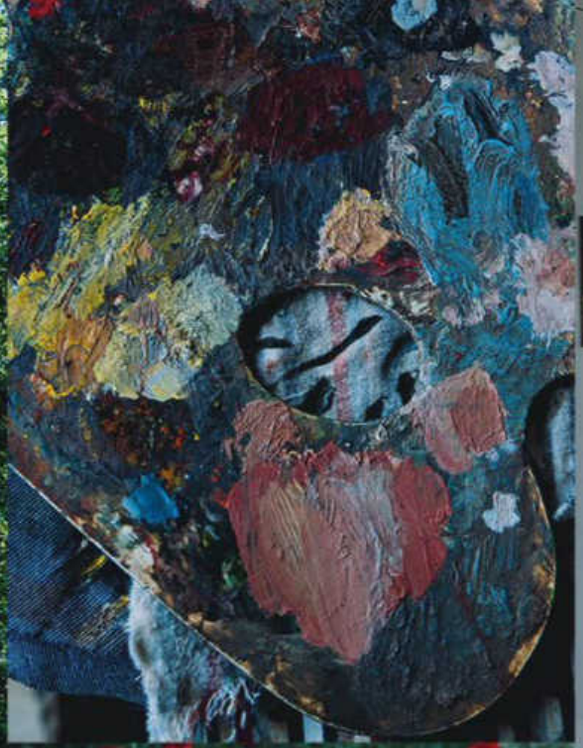


A long garden bed near the top driveway at the back of the house is filled with plantings including a forsythia shrub, artichoke trees and a mass of brightly coloured lupins.



“I’m never bored
as there’s always
lots to do... a garden
is never finished.”









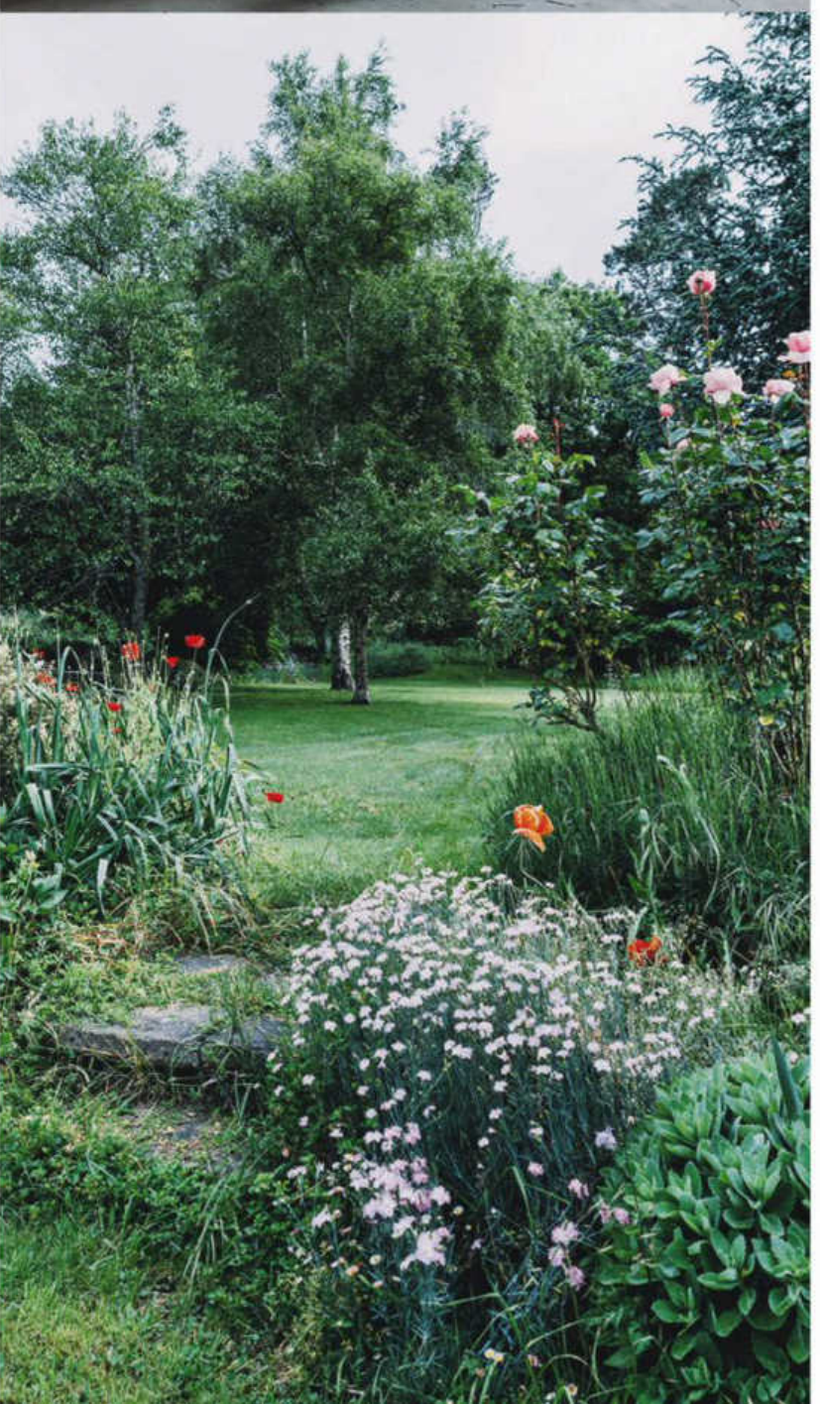


CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE Silver birch trees provide shade; old palettes Lucy no longer uses; some of her poppies; a view from Lucy's studio, looking south. The area around her property receives, on average, 625 millimetres of rain a year and suffers extreme temperatures. "We're 800 metres above sea level here but in a valley, and in my eight years here the coldest has been -12 degrees and the hottest has been 40," Lucy says. "We have ripper frosts — we even had a couple of frosts just before last Christmas."; Earl the greyhound in the lounge room. **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP** The sheep paintings in her studio are "a work in progress"; pink dianthus and roses soften this part of the garden.









The formal stonework of steps and supporting walls in this part of the garden remains, with some superb exotic trees and shrubs, including cornus, rhododendrons and maples planted some 60 or 70 years ago. Lucy is constantly adding to this collection, especially the flowering shrubs such as rhododendrons and conifers.

If you take the right fork in the driveway, you get a view of the magnificent flower border. This bank of flowers is a good 200 metres long and it's easy to see Lucy's colour awareness. It's not perfectly colour co-ordinated but it has that random beauty that comes when nature is allowed to roam. "I'm a great one for letting plants self-seed," she says.

On the other hand, it's far from chaos. Lucy has just made a bed of carefully divided bearded iris. "I tied coloured wool around the stems to help me remember which was which."

Although she moved to Bibbenluke to have a quieter work environment, it's far from silent at Bibbenluke Lodge. Her extensive collection of unloved and rescued birds and animals — which include 42 sheep — are noisy inhabitants.

The flowers, birds and animals are all found again, in paint on the walls of Lucy's studio. It's a short walk through the puddles, past the ducks and geese to the not-quite-completed building. A south-facing wall of glass provides the artist with fabulous natural light, while a series of couches in the centre of the room are not for visitors but for her dogs.

Hanging on the walls are pictures of Lucy's pigeons and portraits of her sheep. "You can imagine how difficult it is to get a sheep to stand still, so I get a head-and-face shot with my camera and work the painting from the photograph."

As well, there's a small selection of pictures of people with their pets. Several of these portraits will be included in an exhibition at Canberra's National Portrait Gallery from November until February 2017, titled *Popular Pets Show*. "I have to give them a selection of about 20 and they will choose five to hang in the show," Lucy explains.

"I'm never bored as there's always lots to do. As you know, a garden is never finished and I'm terrible. I'm always making yet another bed for more plants!"

Bibbenluke Lodge could be described as an earthly paradise for its habitants. After all, geographically speaking, it's not far from Eden... CS

Lucy was represented until recently by The Hughes Gallery in Sydney. The Monaro is home to several other leading gardens and a tour will be conducted by the Nimmitabel and District Garden Club on April 2. Bookings are essential. For more information, email nblgardenclub@gmail.com

DECORATING PAINTS AND FABRICS

Wooden **table**, $395, from Kabinett. **ON TABLE, FROM LEFT** Brass **cup**, $60, from Montreux. **Pencils** and **brushes** (in cup), stylist's own. Vintage art **books**, from $12 each, from The Junk Company. **Paint swatches** (from top): Berger Phelan Pearl, Carnival Rose and Dimple, all from Inspirations Paint. **Glass**, stylist's own. Enamel **jug**, $18, from Red Cart Vintage. Bridget Bodenham oval moon **dish**, $35. Vintage Japanese raku-ware **teacup** (on dish), $35 a pair, from Kazari. Maple syrup **bucket**, $65, from Montreux. Shilo Engelbrecht 'Rosa Frihet' digitally printed **fabric** (as background), POA. **Flowers** from Say It With Flowers. **FACING PAGE Background**, as before. *Haze* **artwork** in gauche (in background), $450, from John Lloyd Gallery. Designers Guild 'Bloomsbury Rose Damson' **cushion** (on floor), $275, from Radford. Woven **basket**, $35, from Waverley Antique Bazaar. **IN BASKET, FROM LEFT** Canvas painted in Berger Everlast low sheen interior **paint** in Dimple, $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. Sequana 'Donegal' tweed stripe **fabric** in Rose, POA, and 'Autumn Leaves' **fabric**, POA, both from Tigger Hall Design. Wooden **table**, as before. **ON TABLE, FROM LEFT Brass cup**, **pencils**, **brushes** and **books**, as before. Plaster **bust**, $34, from The Junk Company. **Dish**, **jug**, **teacup** and **bucket**, as before. **Mug**, $16, from The Junk Company. Enamel **jug**, $36, from Red Cart Vintage. Toiles de Mayenne 'Délice des 4 Saisons' **fabric** in Rouge, $298 a metre, from Brownlow Interior Design. Tara Shackell **dish**, $35, from Mr Kitly. **Paint swatches** (from top): Berger Phelan Pearl, Carnival Rose and Dimple, all from Inspirations Paint; Porter's Paints Birthday Candle; Berger Harry's Red Wagon, from Inspirations Paint. Cane **chair**, $65, from Waverley Antique Bazaar. Linge Particulier **cushion** (on chair), $50, from Scarlet Jones. **Flowers**, as before. **For stockist details, see page 143.**



artists in residence

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PHOTOGRAPHY **LISA COHEN**
STYLING **TESS NEWMAN-MORRIS**



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Walls painted in Berger Everlast low sheen interior **paint** in Fresh Dew, $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. *On the Hill* **sketch**, $380, from John Lloyd Gallery. 'Baha' **chandelier**, $249, from Schots Home Emporium. **TROLLEY** Industrial **trolley**, $438, from Schots Home Emporium. **ON TOP SHELF, FROM LEFT** Ceramic **pot**, $70, from Montreux. Henry Dean round **vase**, $169, from Manon Bis. **Clip**, stylist's own. **Paint swatches** (from top): Berger Cloud Formation, from Inspirations Paint; Dulux Natural White; Taubmans Stetson; British Paints Arctic Crossing; Dulux Hog Bristle. *Study of a Boy* **artwork** by Alexandra Brownlow, $300, from Brownlow Interior Design. **Mortar and pestle**, $88, from Kabinett. **ON MIDDLE SHELF, FROM FRONT** Liberty Art Interiors 'Simon' **wallpaper** in Chantilly Cream, POA, and Designers Guild 'Rasetti' **wallpaper** in Ivory, POA, both from Radford. **Cup**, $60, from Montreux. **Gumnuts** (in cup), stylist's own. **ON BOTTOM SHELF, FROM TOP** Equipo 'Licula' **fabric**, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. Ralph Lauren 'Addison' **denim** in Bleached White, POA, from Radford. 'Adra' **chair**, $199, from Schots Home Emporium. **ON CHAIR, FROM TOP** Cole & Son 'Trees' **wallpaper**, POA, from Radford. Tyler Hall 'French Market' **wallpaper**, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. Walter G 'Uteki' **cushion**, $99, from The Shelley Panton Store. Bonnie and Neil **cushion**, $185, from Turner and Lane. Jute **rug**, $159, from Schots Home Emporium. *Spotted Magpie* **painting**, $750, from John Lloyd Gallery. *Turn Tides* **artwork**, $2800, from Kerry Armstrong Art. 'Leo' **stool**, $79, from Schots Home Emporium. **ON STOOL, FROM LEFT** 'SP Table' **pourer**, $28, from The Shelley Panton Store. **Pens** and **brushes**, stylist's own. Andrei Davidoff **plate**, $48, from Mr Kitly. Berger Everlast low sheen interior **paint** in Ice Fountain (in bottle), $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. **For stockist details, see page 143.**



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP Clip, stylist's own. **Paint swatches** (from top): Berger Cloud Formation, from Inspirations Paint; Dulux Natural White; Taubmans Stetson; British Paints Arctic Crossing; Dulux Hog Bristle. **STOOL Stool**, $120, from Kabinett. **ON STOOL, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT** Cecil Deladier '#119' **vase**, $185, from Mr Kitly. **Pencils**, **brushes** and **scissors** (in vase), stylist's own. Enamel **jug**, $36, from Red Cart Vintage. **Bottle**, stylist's own. Berger Everlast low sheen interior **paint** in Ice Fountain (in bottle), $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. Andrei Davidoff rectangle **plate**, $33, from Mr Kitly. **Cupboard**, $120, from Red Cart Vintage. **ON CUPBOARD, FROM FRONT** Andrei Davidoff **plate**, $48, from Mr Kitly. **Jar** and **stirrer**, stylist's own. Berger Everlast low sheen interior **paint** in White Whiskers (in jar), $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. Bridget Bodenham 'Treasure' **cup**, $30. 'Kesa' tin **suitcase**, $129, from Schots Home Emporium. **IN SUITCASE, FROM FRONT** Cole & Son 'Trees' **wallpaper** in Black/White, POA, and Liberty Art Fabrics 'Simon' **wallpaper** in Chantilly Cream, POA, both from Radford. Vintage **painting**, $35, from The Junk Company. Tyler Hall 'French Market' **wallpaper**, POA, and Peter Fasano 'Meadow' **wallpaper** in Peat, POA, both from Tigger Hall Design. **Flowers** from Say It With Flowers. **For stockist details, see page 143.**



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP CENTRE Easel, $65, from The Junk Company. Vintage ship **painting** (on easel), $245, from Kabinett. **Paint swatches** (on easel, from top): Berger Insight and Aquatic Cycle, both from Inspirations Paint; Porter's Paints Atlas; Berger Stepping Stone, from Inspirations Paint; Porter's Paints Sea Monster. Enamel **mug** (on foot of easel), $10, from Kabinett. **Brushes** and **paint tubes** (in mug), stylist's own. *That Lonely Day* acrylic **artwork**, $1900, from Kerry Armstrong Art. Greg Stirling oak **table**, $1200, from Brownlow Interior Design. **ON TABLE, FROM LEFT** Sandra Bowkett stitched **vessel**, $75, from Mr Kitly. Elham **notebook**, $29, from Manon Bis. Bridget Bodenham spotted **vase** in Indigo, $110. Vintage blue **vase**, $68, from The Junk Company. Walter G 'Indigo Spot' **cushion**, $ 120, from The Shelley Panton Store. 'Salvaged' **cushion** in Navy, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. Block print **rug**, $128, from Kabinett. Ralph Lauren 'Persimmon' **fabric** in Original, POA, from Radford. Bind & Fold dyed **tablecloth**, $190, from Kazari. Designers Guild 'Seraphina' **wallpaper** in Delft (in front), POA, from Radford. Tyler Hall 'Folies' **wallpaper** in Delft, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. Liberty Art Fabrics 'Petronella' **fabric** in Delft, POA; William Yeoward 'Scillo' striped **fabric** in Indigo, POA; and Liberty Art Fabrics 'Emerald and Rose' **fabric** in Coal Grey, POA, all from Radford. **Flowers** from Say It With Flowers. **FACING PAGE** William Yeoward 'Perosita' **fabric** in Indigo (as background), POA, from Radford. **CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT** Jennifer Shorto 'Shea Tree' **fabric**, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. **Peg** and **gumnuts**, stylist's own. Bind & Fold dyed **tea towel**, $33, and Scratch and Wander ice **bowl**, $39, both from Mr Kitly. Bridget Bodenham oval moon **dish**, $35, **spoon**, $15, and soy sauce **pot** with silver lid, $55. **For stockist details, see page 143.**

TIP For a durable finish, paint floors with Berger Jet Dry AquaTread Satin in Silver Tassle — it's touch-dry in just 30 minutes. 132 525; bergerjetdry.com.au

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the creative country

WE MEET FOUR ACCLAIMED RURAL-BASED PAINTERS WHO TELL THE AUSTRALIAN STORY THE ARTIST'S WAY.

PHOTOGRAPHY **MARK ROPER**

Landscape painter Philip Wolfhagen prepares for another day's work at his studio in central Tasmania. See page 75.

CHERRY HOOD

More than a decade ago, Cherry moved from Sydney to 34 hectares at Towrang, near Goulburn in the NSW southern tablelands, where she paints and holds regular workshops.

You moved to Towrang soon after winning the Archibald Prize in 2002. Why?
We lived in Balmain in Sydney, and I was going stir crazy with the stress of city life and all the fuss after my win. Towrang is just two hours' drive from Sydney — and when we found this property, Crystal Hill, with its wonderful views and local stone featuring real crystals, we just fell in love.

What is work like for you here?
Another great reason to get a farm is so you can build a huge shed for your studio! Mine is 21 metres by 11 metres and has everything. There's plenty of room for my students as well — once a month I have a residential workshop for 6–8 students.

How does country life influence your art?
It's so quiet, the air is fresh — and I think the sky and the feeling of space, of being able to see forever, is good for the psyche. It's a great sense of freedom. I can work whenever I want for as long as I want without being stuck in traffic. Plus I have wonderful 'real' friends. I know all my neighbours, even though they are literally miles away from me, and I was made to feel very welcome by the local art community.

You work almost always in watercolour. What do you love about this medium?
The more I use watercolour, the more beauty I find. It gives you effects no artist could imagine, let alone make happen. It's completely different to oil or acrylic, where every mark must be made. Watercolour paints for you. It's quite magical.

Cherry's next solo show is in Brisbane in October at Heiser Gallery, (07) 3254 2849, heisergallery.com.au. She is also represented by Olsen Irwin in Sydney, (02) 9327 3922, olsenirwin.com; Arc One Gallery in Melbourne, (03) 9650 0589, arcone.com.au; Turner Galleries in Perth, (08) 9227 1077, turnergalleries.com.au; and Greenaway Art Gallery in Adelaide, (08) 8362 6354, greenaway.com.au. For details on her workshops, visit cherryhood.co

WORDS **CATHERINE McCORMACK** PHOTOGRAPHY **PETER SOLNESS**
FACING PAGE WORDS **VIRGINIA IMHOFF** PHOTOGRAPHY **MARK ROPER**

Cherry Hood at work in her studio on *Farid*. Behind her is another watercolour on canvas, *Gabriella*.



PHILIP WOLFHAGEN

This prolific Tasmanian landscape painter has a studio in Longford and lives nearby on a small farm.

You have a country background. Has it left a lasting impression on you?
I grew up on a sheep farm in the Tasmanian midlands. Of all the influences on my work, the first 10 years of life were the most formative. My sense of awe and delight at being in close proximity to wild nature had formed by then. We lived in a remote valley at the edge of pastoral land and mountain bush — some might call this wilderness but it is written all over with human narratives.

How does country life influence your art?
My passion for gardening dictated my circumstances. I could not sustain the poisonous environment of the studio without the fresh air of the outdoors in the garden. My wife Catherine and I returned to Tasmania (from Sydney) in 1996 to rescue an old cottage from oblivion, plant a garden and have children. A large part of the move was to allow me to paint full time and to be closer to the source of the work. The geographical shift had a marked effect on my paintings. The work became more immediate in its response to the landscape.

Do you have a favourite place to paint?
I always paint in the studio. I need the conceptual distance from actual landscape, allowing me to distil impressions and memories of landscape. For source material I return to the same places. A perennial favourite landscape type is anywhere above the treeline in the Tasmanian mountains. I respond to the wind-sculpted vegetation and lichen-encrusted rocks — it is like a garden should be. In this environment I feel unconstrained, free to imagine.

Philip's two forthcoming exhibitions are at Philip Bacon Galleries in Brisbane, opening September 20, and at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston, opening November 5. He is represented by Bett Gallery in Hobart, (03) 6231 6511, bettgallery.com.au; Karen Woodbury Gallery in Melbourne, (03) 9639 5855, kwgallery.com; and Dominik Mersch Gallery in Sydney, (02) 9368 1999, dominikmerschgallery.com

Philip Wolfhagen stands in front of his 2014 work *Little World No.7.*

JOHN WOLSELEY

Born in the United Kingdom, the award-winning landscape artist now works from a studio in the Whipstick Forest, north of Bendigo in Victoria.

Do you have a country background?
I was born on a farm on the edge of Exmoor (in south-west England), which was very wild moorland area with lush combes, or valleys, coming off the moor. As a small boy I spent my whole time in the forest and in ponds or little rivers gathering various animals that I used to have as pets — snakes and field mice, and even dormice. The particular area I got to know was the remains of an old deer park where the vegetation was untouched compared to most areas in Britain, and it wasn't until I came to Australia that I could find ecosystems intact in the same way.

How does nature influence your art?
I am a passionate natural scientist and paint in order to record the way nature works. But in later years I found we are damaging natural systems so much that the natural laws are being extraordinarily damaged. It seems to me important that an artist shows the beauty of the systems by which nature works and finds a way not to destroy it.

Do you have a favourite place to paint?
One of my favourites is the Whipstick Forest where I live. It's reminiscent — and could be a distant outlier — of the Mallee (a district near Mildura in Victoria), and I love the Mallee because it is such tough and brave landscape. It has a wonderfully pared-down and wild quality.

My favourite country in the north is east Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, where I find the monsoon rainforest and the great flood plains are a wonderful source for my painting. I have made friends with a number of Yolgnu elders, who have shown me how their culture is very alive and powerful. I have been learning a lot and the reason I love it is having people with a vast knowledge teaching me.

John will be exhibiting his current work from east Arnhem Land in late 2016 at Australian Galleries in Melbourne, where he is represented, (03) 9417 4303; australiangalleries.com.au. He is also represented by Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery in Sydney, (02) 9331 1919; roslynoxley9.com.au



John with works from his recent exhibition *Heartlands and Headwaters*, which also featured pieces by Northern Territorian artist Mulkun Wirrpanda.

LUKE SCIBERRAS

Living and working in the NSW central tablelands provides this well-known landscape painter with a space to be immersed in his practice.

You moved from Sydney to country NSW. Why?
From the very first encounters I had with the region, I was hooked! I began coming here in the 1990s on romantic weekends with my then-girlfriend (and fellow artist) Gria Shead, and then moved here to bring up our daughter Stella. In those visits I remember wonderful weekends with friends, drinking wine in fragrant gardens or drinking whiskey in smoke-filled pubs. You learn so much about a place by talking to the people who live there. It gives meaning to everything you see.

Has living here changed your perspective?
There is a lot of work involved in being a landscape artist — travel, research, long walks and cool reflection. These are the essential ingredients of my practice, and living in the country is the beautiful base from which to carry that out.

What do you love about life in the country?
I have a very busy calendar of exhibiting and travelling. When I'm at home working, I'm happiest spending days on end reflecting and expressing in paint where I've been and how I feel. Living in a small country town keeps me in touch with all the things I hold dear — nature, community, family, gardening, cooking. I love that my life is entirely integrated in a very organic way and a lot of that informs the way I work. It's incredible how many different bodies of work can be gestating in the one studio. For example, this last year I've had works from Gallipoli, Wilcannia, Hong Kong and Bruny Island all at once. This takes focus and time, which is what life in the country gives you.

Are you drawn to certain landscapes or places?
The Australian landscape will enduringly be my main focus, because it is such a new subject. You can count on one hand the number of European artists who have made truly significant and unique inroads into the Australian visual language, which means that what we really have is a vast frontier of new discoveries to be made. For the most part, my work is based on my journeys into outback and central Australian deserts, and this year I am focusing my attentions on one exhibition in spring at Scott Livesey Galleries. My studio is now filling with a new body of works which populate my life like wonderful new friends. CS

Luke's next exhibition will be from August 27–September 17 at Scott Livesey Galleries in Melbourne, where he is represented, (03) 9824 7770; scottliveseygalleries.com

WORDS **CATHERINE McCORMACK** PHOTOGRAPHY **CAT MILLS**
FACING PAGE WORDS **VIRGINIA IMHOFF** PHOTOGRAPHY **MARK ROPER**

Luke's art is inspired by his travels and love of the desert. One of his newest paintings is *Darling River, Wilcannia.*



Artists Genevieve Carroll and Bill Moseley on the path that leads to their Hill End home. “The garden started as a bare paddock and over time a wilderness garden has been created,” Genevieve says. **FACING PAGE** A kitchen cabinet displays a glass ball that was a sculptural birthday card made by Genevieve for Bill, while the teapot cover was made by Genevieve’s mum. The large ceramic bowl on the wall is by Janet Mansfield.



top of the hill

GENEVIEVE CARROLL AND BILL MOSELEY CONTINUE THE TRADITION AS ALL ROADS OF AUSTRALIA'S ARTISTIC TALENT LEAD TO HILL END.

WORDS **ROB INGRAM** PHOTOGRAPHY **MICHAEL WEE**







Historic Hill End, high in the central tablelands of New South Wales, is a landscape for the imagination. For the visitor, there can be something vaguely unsettling about the spirit of the place — the way the sense of abandonment outweighs the sense of renewal. The oasis of manicured prettiness in a ravaged landscape seems like bait in a trap. It is a challenging environment... but it generally brings out the best in those who accept the challenge.

Bill Moseley and Genevieve Carroll are artists who have exhibited widely in Australia and internationally. They are contributing to Hill End's renewal as part of a new generation of artists drawn to a sacred site in Australian art history.

According to curator and art historian Gavin Wilson, the aesthetic possibilities and emotive impact of Hill End were first recognised by Russell Drysdale and Donald Friend in 1947. Other artists to step into this cultural crucible were Jean Bellette, Paul Haefliger, Margaret Olley, David Strachan and later Jeffrey Smart. Brett Whiteley, Michael Johnson, John Olsen and John Firth-Smith came later and, today, Luke Sciberras, Rosemary Valadon, Ana Young and Ben Quilty are all using the drama of Hill End to influence their work.

Genevieve and Bill are building their own life here, among the shadows and memories of the past and the passed.

"We've come to identify with the spirit of Hill End," Genevieve says, "but we're still in awe of its curiousness. There's a wonderment here that sharpens your perceptions, and we're lucky to be among like-minded people. Art is an intensely personal activity but it is important to be among people with who you can enjoy exchanges about art."

Genevieve and Bill met at Sydney's National Art School in 2001. "And it was there that we really became interested in Hill End," she says. "Eleven years ago, we traded our 1919 Hawkesbury River mail ferry for a cluster of 1872 gold rush cottages that hadn't been lived in for 50 years. No power, no water, no bathroom. Luckily, the great quality we share is perseverance and, at last, we've accomplished our dream."











CLOCKWISE, FROM FAR LEFT
Genevieve and Bill in their lounge room. The insect illustrations were found at a flea market in Paris; a cluttered pinboard of notices and artwork is a feature of the studio. Tango the part cattle dog-labrador has a rest; the studio also contains Bill's photogravure *The Pack* (front) and a silver gelatin print titled *Pyrmont*. The wooden type was loaned to the couple by Sydney artist Mini Graff and the book press was gifted by Hill End artist Luke Sciberras; the lounge room's chairs are from St Vincent de Paul and feature the original upholstery; tags from an early Hill End Press range; their Albertine roses are "exquisite", Genevieve says. "When in bloom, the perfume meanders through our home"; a 1920 Gordon platen press purchased at auction was the couple's first printing press; pink hedging roses border the main entrance.

That dream was to find a slower, simpler and more self-determining life that would allow them to pursue their artistic passions with a minimum of interference.

Their talents are expressed in different forms — Bill's dark antiquarian photographic images and Genevieve's bright abstract impressionism — but dovetail in the running of Hill End Press, an antiquarian letterpress print shop producing wedding stationery, cards and posters reflecting individuality and the artisan values dear to them both. They had studied printmaking, but picked up the first of their now-treasured vintage presses thinking it might make a garden sculpture.

Bill, who suspects he might be a 19th-century romantic at heart, was a shipwright in his early days and worked in a photographic laboratory, printing for some of Australia's top professional photographers, before studying art. After graduating, he taught himself the photogravure platemaking and printing technique, even building his own etching press.

"In the United States, in particular, typographers and designers are rediscovering traditional printing techniques and using them to give their work a special, handcrafted quality," he says. "So we built our own studio and now operate a studio school teaching letterpress printmaking, tin type photography and photogravure."

While Bill's photographs often contain a chill of alarm and a wink of tease, Genevieve's paintings burst with the colours and shapes of the garden she has created. "I can't separate my garden from my still-life paintings," says Genevieve, who was a finalist in the 2014 Portia Geach Memorial Award with a self-portrait. "They are connected to each other, as I am connected to them through memories and emotions."

The fields of riotous colour in many of her artworks are a delight to the eye... but maybe all's not roses in these gardens. "Gardens have always offered me a safety valve, a refuge," she says. "When pressures become too great, there's always salvation in the garden. And the emotion I feel in the garden shows up on the canvas." CS

Hill End Press, 1 English Lane, Hill End, NSW. (02) 6337 8151; hillendpress.com.au



OUR LIFE IN THE COUNTRY CALDWELL NSW

Wendy and Peter with their children Maggie and Archie, and Sparky the kelpie. **CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT** Wendy paints in her cottage studio; her drypoint etchings *Sea Dog* and *Swamp Wallaby*; some tools of the trade and a recent work in acrylic, *Black Box Flowering*; Archie pedals towards the nearby lagoon. "We're giving our kids a chance to have a unique childhood," Wendy says.





OUR LIFE IN THE COUNTRY

ARTIST WENDY McDONALD AND HER FAMILY ARE ABSORBED BY THEIR RIVERINA SURROUNDINGS.

WORDS **VIRGINIA IMHOFF**
PHOTOGRAPHY **FELIX FOREST**

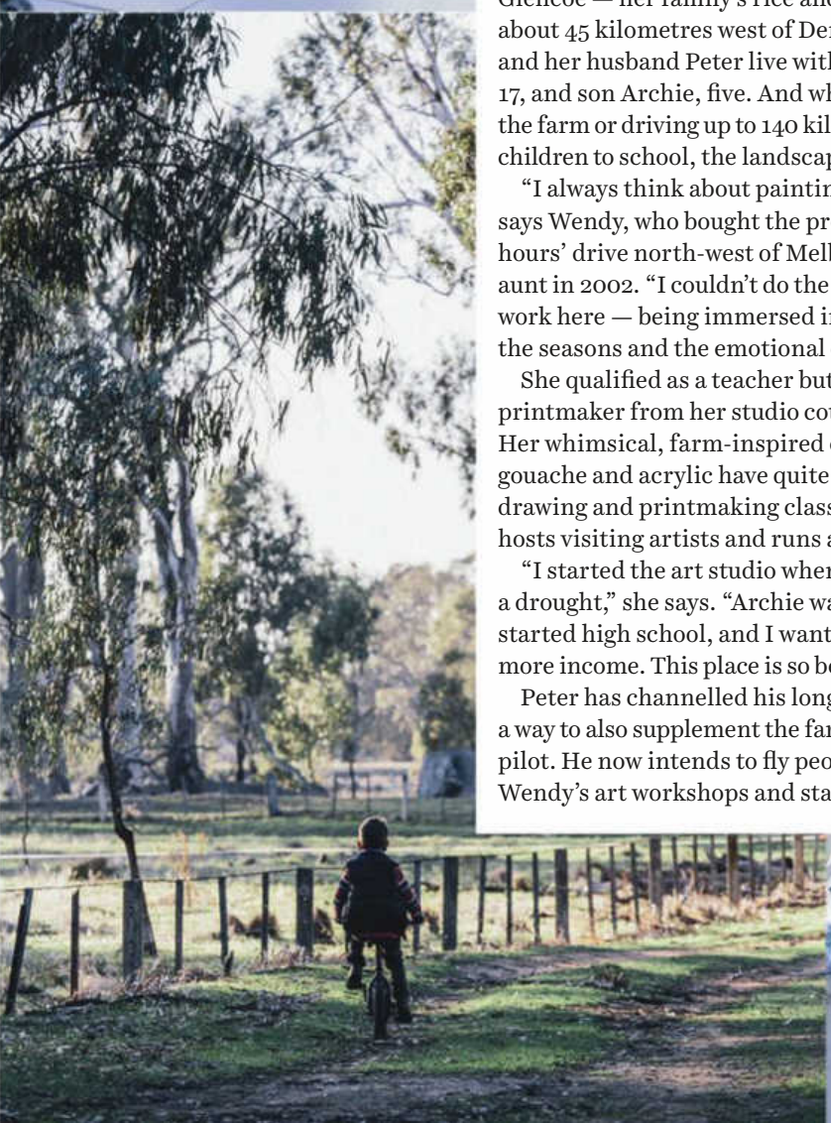
FOR WENDY McDONALD, the river country in the NSW Riverina is her constant inspiration. Here, on Glencoe — her family's rice and sheep property at Caldwell, about 45 kilometres west of Deniliquin — Wendy, an artist, and her husband Peter live with their daughter Maggie, 17, and son Archie, five. And whether she's helping Peter on the farm or driving up to 140 kilometres a day taking the children to school, the landscape is her ever-present muse.

"I always think about painting while I work on the farm," says Wendy, who bought the property, which is about four hours' drive north-west of Melbourne, with Peter from his aunt in 2002. "I couldn't do the paintings that I do if I didn't work here — being immersed in the landscape, in tune with the seasons and the emotional connection the farm gives."

She qualified as a teacher but now works as a painter and printmaker from her studio cottage overlooking a lagoon. Her whimsical, farm-inspired creations using pastels, gouache and acrylic have quite a following. She also runs drawing and printmaking classes and weekend camps, hosts visiting artists and runs art classes for local children.

"I started the art studio when we were coming out of a drought," she says. "Archie was a baby and Maggie had started high school, and I wanted to find a way to generate more income. This place is so beautiful that I love to share it."

Peter has channelled his longtime passion for flying into a way to also supplement the farm income — as a commercial pilot. He now intends to fly people in while they attend Wendy's art workshops and stay in their cottage. >









CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE
Linda the Jersey house cow waits to be milked; a ewe and her lamb take cover among the river red gum saplings; Wendy likes to work in acrylic paints; Glencoe, the family's 400-hectare property, has been in Peter's family for nearly 80 years. Since he and Wendy purchased it in 2002, it has been a roller-coaster of drought, life-giving rain for a few brief seasons and, now, dry again; they grow much of their produce and are well supplied with lemons. **FACING PAGE** Wendy's painting *Morning, House Dam* on display in the studio. "I love capturing the changes in the landscape, the space and openness," she says. "I also love doing still-lifes such as the snapshots of daily rituals, of what has just been baked or put on the plate, or fruit just picked off the trees." The wooden rabbit and lamp both came from Plains Design in Deniliquin, which is owned by interior designer Janet Byrne. "She also sells my etchings and has been a great supporter since day one," Wendy explains.









"I couldn't do the paintings that I do if I didn't work here."



"A lot of people in my family have had a pilot's licence," he says. "In recent months, I flew people to the Nhill air show and the Temora air show. Wendy and I are passionate about these things, so it'd be great to bring them together into a tourism venture."

Getting away from the farm isn't easy but the McDonalds have a favoured venue for holidays. Waterskiing is their sport, and they have a small place by the water at Lake Charm, 80 kilometres away near Kerang in Victoria. "When I was young, Mum and Dad were good skiers and we had a boat," Peter says. "Maggie is now a really keen waterskier."

As his wife explains, "Rice farmers don't do beach holidays — you're tied to the farm between October and March. Lake Charm is a popular spot for farmers around here. It's so hot and it's important to get off the farm because it's all-consuming."

wendy I come from Melbourne and always told Mum and Dad I'd end up on a farm. Peter and I met in Geelong in Victoria, where I was doing a Bachelor of Education degree and he was at TAFE doing wool classing. We got married in 1988 and moved here.

I taught for a while, and when Peter started an excavation business I grew the rice on the farm. I also started painting again — I did art at school — and it went from there. I work from nature and in the field with pastels, gouache and acrylic, then come back and finish in the studio.

It's very important to me how we use the land, especially here in the Murray-Darling Basin. We have European expectations that the land has to be lush and green. We have a lot to learn. I hope through my paintings that people might understand the landscape more and not feel threatened by it.

It's such beautiful country. When the Thule Lagoon just beyond the fence filled with water after rains broke the drought, we had canoes and would paddle through the trees. We could waterski in there and have picnics under the trees. Everything came to life. Then, when the water started to drop, thousands of pelicans flew into the lagoon — they stretched for more than a kilometre, fishing and talking among themselves. They were here for two weeks, then one morning they started flying off.

It's so lovely to have that sense of family here. We gain so much satisfaction from the sense that, for us, farming is meaningful work. My art has become a natural extension of all this.

I value that the kids are connected to the land and can be part of a special community. We enjoy things all country families do — campfires, bike riding, swimming in the dam, yabbying and the farm work. Living on a farm also gives the kids the space to think creatively in their down time.

We believe the benefits outweigh the negatives. Even an early morning walk becomes exciting when you spot wedge-tailed eagles feeding, or a black wallaby along the track. It is about the small things.

peter I grew up about 20 kilometres away, on a rice and sheep property, and went to a school that was a converted shearing shed. We'd get there by going through our back paddock in the ute, and a kangaroo we had reared and our big Alsatian used to follow us. The school only had 12 kids — then a family of five left, the school was closed and we had to go to school in Deniliquin. After that I was sent to school in Geelong, and then I did wool classing and spent six months rouseabouting.

I was going to stay on the family farm, but Dad was killed in a tractor accident when I was 20 and the place was sold. Wendy and I then bought a small place halfway between here and Dad's farm.

The first weekend Wendy came up from Geelong, I brought her here and she said, "That's a beautiful house — I'd love to live there one day." Great-uncle Gus and great-aunt Norma had built this house in 1938 and their daughter Joyce was here. We'd call in and she'd always say she'd had enough and was selling up, but that went on for years. We pestered her for about three years and then she finally sold. We inherited a lot of stuff with the place. They took what they wanted and left the rest — the pantry was full of preserving jars that we use now.

Glencoe is about 400 hectares, and when the Perricoota State Forest floods, the lagoon — which was part of the Murray River thousands of years ago — fills with water. We bought it in 2002 and went straight into drought. We had eight years without growing rice, then in 2011 we had rice. We had rice last summer and this year we just have sheep and no rice. We had rain a few months ago but it was too late. Everything had gone yellow and burnt off.

Everyone on the land is trying to be innovative. My father was a pilot, and as a boy he flew me over Deniliquin when it was in flood in 1975 — I've never forgotten it. We have an airstrip on the property and plan to fly people here for Wendy's art classes.

We feel privileged to live in such a unique environment. And we're giving our kids a chance to have a unique childhood, with links to the generations that have farmed here before me. CS

Wendy's solo exhibition This Place *runs at Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery from April 5–May 8, (03) 5036 2430; gallery.swanhill.vic.au. She will also exhibit work in a group show at Koskela in Sydney in late 2016; koskela.com.au. For details of her work and art classes/accommodation, visit wendymcdonald.com.au*







CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE LEFT
Wendy with an etching in progress; the property's dam with Thule Lagoon, the ancient bed of the Murray River, in the background. The lagoon bristles with river red gum seedlings that are a legacy of the last major rain. "It's one of our most productive paddocks," explains Peter, who will plough the tiny trees the next time he can sow a new crop there; Archie tries his hand at milking so his mum can make yoghurt; sheep have just been through the wool shed; poddy calves raised by Maggie on a bucket come looking for a feed; a detail of *Swamp Wallaby*; preserving is a family tradition.










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The dining room of late artist Margaret Olley's Sydney home has been faithfully re-established at the Tweed Regional Gallery in northern NSW. See page 92.



PHOTOGRAPHY **ALICIA TAYLOR**

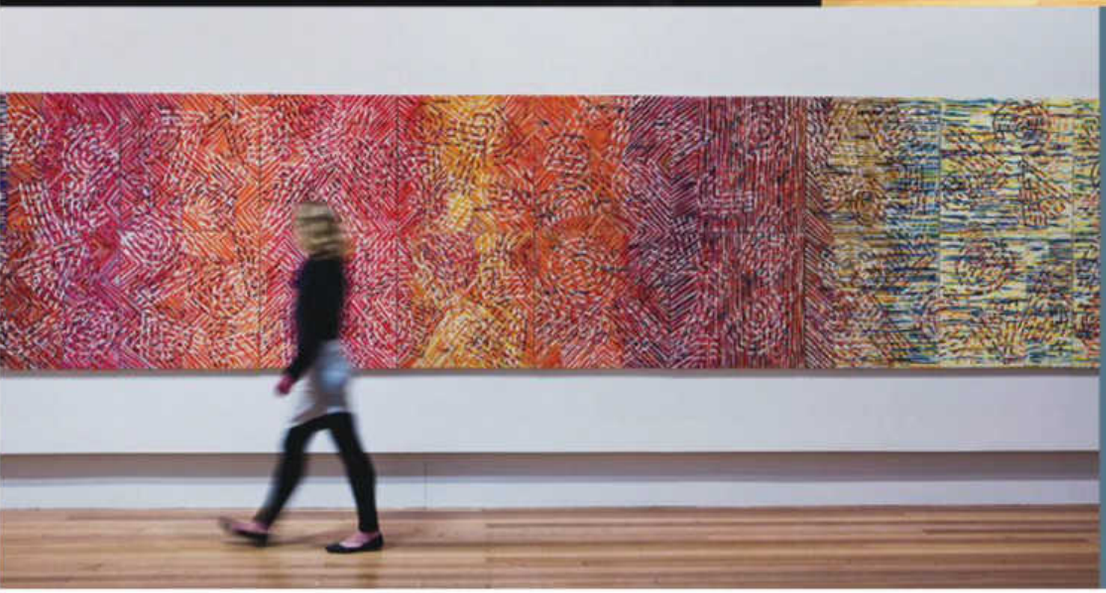
exhibition tour

TRAVEL THROUGH TINY TOWNS, VAST DESERTS AND REGIONAL CITIES AS WE DISCOVER AUSTRALIA'S 20 MOST REWARDING ART GALLERIES AND CENTRES.

WORDS **CLARE PATIENCE**







CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE LEFT Step inside the City of Greater Geraldton Regional Art Gallery to escape the heat and you find yourself in a space that wouldn't be out of place in London or New York; art appreciation can start early when a facility such as Launceston's Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery is at your disposal; the QVMAG is Australia's largest regional art gallery. **FACING PAGE** Set on about 60 hectares, The Cedars in Hahndorf features approximately 200 original pieces of art by Hans Heysen and his daughter Nora.

1 LAUNCESTON, DEVONPORT AND BURNIE (TAS)

The Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery sits splendidly in Launceston's Royal Park, as the 125-year-old building rises gracefully from the primped and preened gardens. Recently refurbished, the gallery has an extensive collection of fine arts and decorative pieces.

"We have one of the nation's best colonial art collections, featuring the works of John Glover, Hugh Ramsay and Tom Roberts," says exhibitions and conservation manager Andrew Johnson of a gallery that celebrates the past. "People always comment on the amount of collections on display."

An hour's drive to the north, Devonport Regional Gallery, once known as The Little Gallery, is an endearing space set in a former Baptist church built in 1904. The driving light behind the space was Jean Thomas, whose vision was for a place to promote the local arts and culture.

On Tasmania's north-west coast, the pretty port city of Burnie is home to a different kind of artist experience with the Makers' Workshop. This cultural centre combines history, arts, crafts and workshops into an interactive experience by linking local artisans to visitors through talks, seminars and interactive displays — all set in an award-winning architectural home that looks out onto Bass Strait.

Go to www.qvmag.tas.gov.au; devonportgallery.com; discoverburnie.net

2 GERALDTON AND BUNBURY (WA)

Art beats strongly in Geraldton, a port city on Western Australia's coast about 420 kilometres north of Perth.

The heritage-listed City of Greater Geraldton Regional Art Gallery, which acted as town hall at the beginning of the 20th century, provides the starting point for local art experiences.

The gallery's $45,000 non-acquisitive Mid West Art Prize, launched in 2011, resonates through the area and helps foster a creative community.

"The gallery's collection comprises more than 475 works ranging from the traditional to contemporary — there's something for everyone," says acting director Julie-Ann Sproule. Standouts include the Norman Lindsay and Elizabeth Durack collections, on display until the end of April.

Also worth adding to your tour of Geraldton is Yamaji Art centre, which is rich in Aboriginal textiles, painting, weaving, design, printmaking and performance art. While there, also drop in to the Arts & Cultural Development Council (ACDC), to view authentic community-driven contemporary art.

Head back to Perth and then down the coast to Bunbury, where the pink towers of the Bunbury Regional Art Galleries sit close to the town centre and offer a unique regional contemporary art experience. A champion of local contemporary works, it is a wonderful addition to the state's third-largest city.

Go to artgallery.cgg.wa.gov.au; yamajiart.com; acdc.org.au

3 HAHNDORF AND MURRAY BRIDGE (SA)

A short trip in the car south-east of Adelaide, snaking through the charming Adelaide Hills, is Hahndorf.



PHOTOGRAPHY **SHARYN CAIRNS** (FACING PAGE)
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF THE GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS

Lovingly set up by homesick German immigrants in the early 19th century, this village is blessed with chestnut, elm and cork tree-lined streets and plentiful pubs, cafés and restaurants.

It's also home to The Cedars, the studio of the much lauded artist Hans Heysen. Completed in 1913, it remains the nation's oldest purpose-built studio home and is a perfectly preserved time capsule of Federation Arts and Crafts architecture and interior design.

"Visitors leave with a much greater awareness of Hans Heysen's incredible versatility in both subject and medium," says gallery curator Allan Campbell.

Best known for grand watercolour bush landscapes, Heysen's remarkable oeuvre is uncovered at The Cedars.

"It remains a delight to view the oil paintings of flowers and fruit, which hang in the residence as part of the family's private collection," Allan says.

Legend has it that the famous prima ballerina Anna Pavlova unsuccessfully offered a blank cheque for the artist's 1923 work *Zinnias and Autumn Fruit*, which remains in the dining room today.

Not far from The Cedars, on Main Street, is The Hahndorf Academy, set in a century-old former boarding school and maternity hospital. The formal historic surrounds definitely belie the exciting contemporary collection inside, which makes it a worthwhile addition to your art tour.

Back in the car for an easy 40-minute drive further south-east and you will find yourself in the much larger town of Murray Bridge. Reinvigorated as an arts destination, the jewel in the crown is the Murray Bridge Regional Gallery, which boasts three gallery spaces. Its collection of local talent is very impressive and includes works by Franz Kempf, Trevor Nicholls, Pamela Kouwenhoven and textile artist India Flint, as well as glass, jewellery, textiles and ceramics from around the country.

Go to hansheysen.com.au; hahndorfacademy.org.au; murraybridgegallery.com.au. To learn more about the town of Hahndorf, see On The Move on page 138.

4 TWEED RIVER (NSW) AND CALOUNDRA (QLD)

Revealing the interior life of arguably Australia's greatest still-life painter Margaret Olley is the eponymous art centre in Murwillumbah, NSW.

The meticulous re-creation of Olley's Paddington home in its new residence celebrates the late artist's life and loves. Visitors are able to walk through her 'Hat Factory' exactly as it was, including details such as original rickety door frames and faded curtains.

"A highlight is the Yellow Room, which was a treasured sanctuary for Margaret," says gallery director Susi Muddiman. "It's a space that featured extensively in her work and we've preserved all of the fine details that meant so much to her."

The gallery lends much deeper understanding of this intriguing artist's motivations and muses through easy-to-use multimedia displays and themed exhibitions.

The adjoining Tweed Regional Gallery, set in the expansive, romantic landscape of rivers, mountains and >







rolling lawns, is worth dedicating a further few hours to. Home to world-class exhibitions and a packed schedule that changes every eight weeks, the gallery should become a regular road trip for art lovers.

Over the border and up past Brisbane on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, the seaside town of Caloundra has a pretty regional gallery that, despite being a smaller space, thinks big in terms of contemporary, photographic and local art exhibitions.

Go to artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au/MargaretOlleyArtCentre; gallery.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

5 BULLEEN AND HEALESVILLE (VIC)

Since its inception in 1934, the Heide Museum of Modern Art, located in Bulleen on Melbourne's eastern outskirts, has focused on nurturing art and creative expression.

Its charismatic founders, John and Sunday Reed, established the rambling six-hectare property as a meeting place for artists, writers and intellectuals to help promote modern art.

Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker and Joy Hester were all regulars here and their outside-the-box thinking lives on in the architect-designed modernist icon that stands today.

With a deserved reputation for artistic excellence, Heide connects contemporary pieces with nature thanks to a world-class sculpture garden that includes works by Anish Kapoor, Anthony Caro, Neil Taylor, Dennis Oppenheim and Inge King, as well as gardens by Lauren Berkowitz and Fiona Hall. Inside, three galleries display international artworks as well as exhibitions by up-and-coming artists and interactive displays.

"Heide offers an inspiring, educational and insightful experience of modern and contemporary art, architecture and landscape on a variety of levels," says Sue Curwood, the gallery's marketing and communications manager. "Heide is regarded as one of Victoria's most interesting art institutions."

Café Vue, the brainchild of Melbourne chef Shannon Bennett of Vue de Monde fame, offers a French-inspired menu onsite and can pack you a gourmet picnic hamper to enjoy in the spectacular surrounds. (There is also a special one-off camp-out at Heide involving Cafe Vue on March 5, which you can read about in *A Month in the Country* on page 24.)

Back in the car, a 45-minute drive further east lies another world-class architectural award-winning gallery, TarraWarra Museum of Art.

Both distinctly Australian and international at heart, this gallery is an exceptional way to experience art in a stunning environment. Designed by acclaimed architect Allan Powell to frame the landscape, the surrounds are just as important as the leading exhibitions that grace the walls.

"Our exhibition program invites visitors to think about the relationship between inside and outside, and that deepens the appreciation for and knowledge of 'the view'," says gallery director Victoria Lynn.

Go to heide.com.au; twma.com.au >

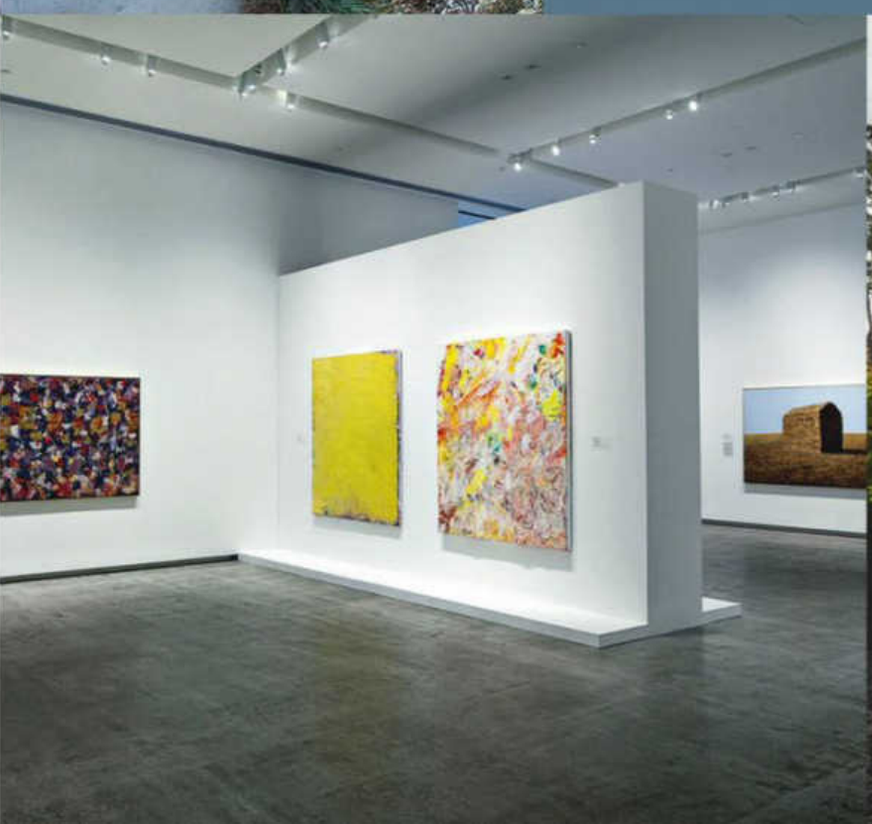
PHOTOGRAPHY **ALICIA TAYLOR** (FACING PAGE, TOP RIGHT) PHOTOGRAPHY **MICHAEL WEE** OTHER PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF THE MUSEUMS







CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE LEFT The Sculpture Park at Heide Museum of Modern Art near Melbourne stretches over six hectares and features pieces including Jeff Thompson's *Cows*; in the past, Heide showed the work of Arthur Boyd. Fans of Boyd will especially enjoy Bundanon, the artist's estate near the Shoalhaven River in NSW — this path leads visitors to Boyd's former studio (see page 95); Heide III (also seen at left), with its black titanium zinc exterior, was built in 1993 and is now the main gallery; located near Heide in Healesville, the TarraWarra Museum of Art's exhibitions include 2015's *The Triumph of Modernism*. **FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** The re-created home of Margaret Olley at the Tweed Regional Gallery has the artist's original garden doors and kitchen; the gallery was designed by architect Bud Brannigan; photographer John McRae's *Portrait of Margaret Olley in Her Paddington Studio* (2011).







FROM LEFT Haefliger's Cottage in NSW's Hill End was lived in by artist Paul Haefliger and his wife, fellow artist Jean Bellette, after their studies in Europe and before they settled in Spain in 1957. The red paint on the cottage's walls was matched to a colour hand-mixed by Haefliger and artist Donald Friend; *Perfect Solitude*, an artwork by NSW artist Lucy Vader, is hung at Michael Reid Murrurundi gallery in the Hunter Valley; outside the gallery, a former convict barracks, sculptor Gregor Kregar's polished stainless steel sculpture *Houdini Cloud* stands proud.

6 KIMBERLEY (WA) AND ALICE SPRINGS (NT)

In some ways, the furthest travels provide the most remarkable and fulfilling artistic experiences of all.

Australian art is synonymous with the enigmatic dots and line drawings of Aboriginal artistry. This ancient method moves seamlessly into modern life, bringing its vibrant motions and mediums with it. Collectors and travellers alike can immerse themselves in the landscapes, traditions and politics that inspire the evocative works, with a visit to the numerous art centres within the Kimberley region of Western Australia and the Red Centre.

Owned and managed by Aboriginals, these art centres offer visitors an authentic connection. "We represent Gija artists who paint our surroundings using ochres and charcoals in rhythmic patterns," says Cher Breeze, gallery co-ordinator at the acclaimed Warmun Art Centre at Warmun in the Kimberley. "It's an incredible way to meet the artists whose works appear in the best galleries around the world."

One look at the intensely beautiful, mountainous terrain that glimmers with mossy greens in the wet season illuminates the mystery behind the evocative art made by the likes of Lena Nyadbi, Rusty Peters, Mabel Juli and Queenie McKenzie.

In Alice Springs, a valuable resource to start your trip planning is DesArt, a non-profit industry body for more than 40 central Australian art centres — not only in Alice itself but surrounding areas and all the way up to Tennant Creek.

Go to warmunart.com.au; desart.com.au

7 BATHURST, HILL END AND ORANGE (NSW)

Once home to the Wiradjuri people and, centuries later, gold prospectors, the NSW central tablelands city of Bathurst today has a different kind of riches, in the form of the venerated Bathurst Regional Art Gallery (BRAG).

Rivalling its metropolitan counterparts, BRAG aims to push boundaries. "It delivers a diverse, cutting-edge and authentic visual arts experience," says BRAG's Emma Hill.

Eighty kilometres north of Bathurst lies the settlement of Hill End, which offers the at-once-familiar sweeping landscapes and faded gold-rush era shopfronts made famous by the collective talents of one of Australia's most prolific artist colonies.

Step inside the lives of these influential creatives with a visit to the painstakingly preserved Haefliger's Cottage, the former home to artist Jean Bellette and her husband Paul Haefliger, and Murray's Cottage, where Donald Friend and Donald Murray lived and entertained.

Less than an hour's drive west of Bathurst is Orange, best known for fertile farmland but now also famous for gourmet food and wine experiences.

Here, you'll find Orange Regional Gallery, winner of the Sir John Sulman Medal for architectural merit upon its opening in 1986. It has been built around the exquisite Mary Turner Collection, which includes gems from greats such as Grace Cossington-Smith, Ian Fairweather and Sidney Nolan.

Go to bathurstart.com.au; hillendart.com.au; org.nsw.gov.au

(TOP LEFT) PHOTOGRAPHY **SHARYN CAIRNS** (TOP RIGHT AND FACING PAGE) PHOTOGRAPHY **MICHAEL WEE**



GALLERIES WE LOVE

BUNDANON (NSW) Arthur and Yvonne Boyd's gift to the people, this gallery/artist's studio inland from Nowra on the south coast is a cultural precinct unto itself, bringing together history, art, music and theatre in an events calendar that brims with variety. *bundanon.com.au*

MICHAEL REID MURRURUNDI (NSW) Unassuming and beguiling, this gallery set in a grapevine-draped corner of the Upper Hunter Valley specialises in contemporary and Aboriginal art. The grounds are dotted with sculptures and the onsite café and plant nursery make it a superb trip. *michaelreidmurrurundi.com.au*

BEGA VALLEY REGIONAL GALLERY (NSW) Small but perfectly formed, this venue on the far south coast punches well above its weight, offering the $50,000 Shirley Hannan National Portrait Award for realistic portraiture. A clever little spot with big aspirations, set in cheese-making land, it has to be worth a journey. *begavalley.nsw.gov.au*

CAIRNS REGIONAL GALLERY (QLD) Historical and contemporary works collide in a grand heritage building that basks under far north Queensland's sunny skies. Laden with an extensive collection featuring all facets of Australian art, this gallery promises respite from tourist haunts. *cairnsregionalgallery.com.au*

NORMAN LINDSAY GALLERY & MUSEUM (NSW) Childhood memories reawaken at this beautifully preserved gallery and museum at Faulconbridge in the Blue Mountains. Dedicated to the painter of *The Magic Pudding*, the gallery also explores Lindsay's other works in his gracious sandstone home. *normanlindsay.com.au*

ON TOUR

ARCHIBALD PRIZE Australia's longest-running and most prestigious art prize is hitting the road, touring regional areas with its opinion-raising portraits. The 2015 tour is on now and the 2016 version commences in October. *artgallery.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/touring*

GLASS: ART DESIGN ARCHITECTURE The jewel in South Australia's arts scene, JamFactory is taking 23 painstakingly crafted glass works to regional centres. *jamfactory.com.au/galleries-on-tour*

MICHELANGELO: THE EXHIBITION This international tour arrives in Burnie, Tasmania on March 12 and shines a light on Michelangelo's sculpture, artworks and architecture. *www.burniearts.net/Art-Gallery*

SOUTH AUSTRALIA LIVING ARTS FESTIVAL (SALA) Starting in August, SALA visits metropolitan and rural South Australia. Meet the makers and enjoy the vast array of exhibitions on show. *salainc.com.au*

SALTWATER COUNTRY This collection from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders explores their personal relationships and connections to Queensland's coastal regions. The art is political, environmental and spiritual. The tour runs throughout 2016. *saltwatercountry.org*

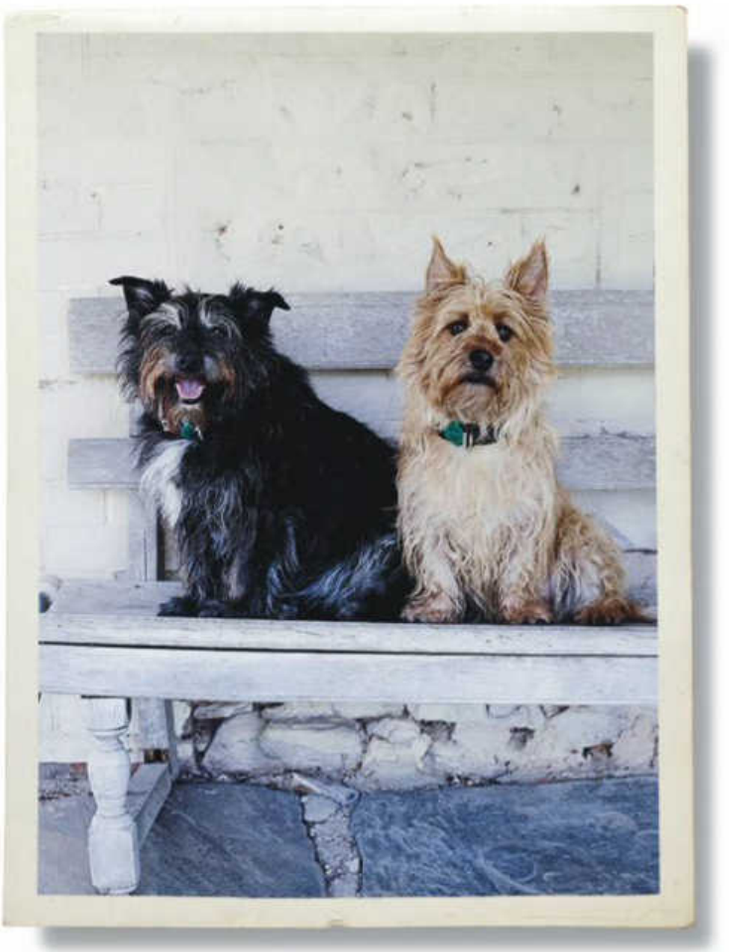


Morgan Allender's cairn terrier crosses, Little (left) and Boots, have a mind of their own, and she wouldn't have it any other way.

little devils

TWO DOGS ARE A CONSTANT SOURCE OF AMUSEMENT AND COMPANIONSHIP FOR ARTIST MORGAN ALLENDER.

WORDS **VIRGINIA IMHOFF** PHOTOGRAPHY **MARK ROPER**



THEY'RE THE CANINE version of *The Odd Couple*. Artist Morgan Allender laughs when she says her two cairn terrier crosses, Little and Boots, have characters like chalk and cheese, but when push comes to shove they're the best of friends. For Morgan and her partner, furniture-maker Justin Hermes — who live on a small farm at Woodside in the Adelaide Hills — the pair make life endlessly entertaining.

"Boots is four going on six months... he'll never grow up," she says. "We bought him as a friend for Little, who we've had for seven or so years, but Little has never forgiven us. They have a love-hate relationship. Boots is so boisterous and tries to be a complete tyrant, and that sets the mood. He would love to be boss, but he's not the boss — he's at the bottom, he's under our cat Pickle!"

Little, who Morgan and Justin found at the RSPCA and is probably now about 11 or 12 years old, is just like a grumpy old man... but he's a real softie underneath. "Little grumbles at Boots but they actually love each other," Morgan says. "Little grooms the younger one because he's always filthy by the end of the day. Boots will be covered with prickles, burrs and sheep poo, and Little licks and grooms him all over and cleans the mud off his tummy. Then he does the cat too!"

When it comes to their idiosyncrasies and peccadilloes, Morgan concedes both dogs are hilarious.

When they first got Little, he was ill with pancreatitis and now needs to be on a vegetarian diet. "We think he's always hungry for food, and he always has a scheme to get more," she says. "His latest is to sneak into the chook house when the chooks are free-ranging and steal an egg. Then he sneaks out into the orchard when he thinks no-one is looking, because he knows he's not allowed to have eggs. One day, I saw him walk in a funny way, all hunched up, from the chook shed, turning his head away so I couldn't see what he had in his mouth. He takes one at a time, then he'll chip the egg open with one tooth, lick the inside out and leave the whole eggshell."

On the other hand, Boots is "the naughtiest dog" Morgan and Justin have ever had. "His favourite deed is to wait until visitors come and we've brushed him, then he'll sneak up to the dam and roll in everything and come back covered in mud," she says. "He's a brat too. Once we spent a lot of money on posh training for him, but he didn't learn a thing. He suddenly tears around the garden all stiff-legged, with his tail curled up over his back... he's hilarious. I'm so glad he ended up here. He wouldn't have survived on a quarter-acre block!"

The dogs are inseparable from each other and their owners. Morgan says that before she and Justin moved to Woodside seven years ago, they lived in Melbourne and she pined for a dog. "I've had dogs all my life and was miserable there without one," she says. "Boots and Little are always with us. They come into the studio with me or go to work with Justin. While we work they love to chill out." CS

Read about Morgan's career as an artist on page 16.

"They are always with us... while we work they love to chill out."

CAIRN TERRIERS

They might be small dogs but cairn terriers are big on personality — active, energetic dogs, with mischievous and often assertive demeanours. It seems that Boots and Little, both cairn terrier crosses (Boots is crossed with an Australian terrier), have inherited the hallmark cairn traits.

The cairn is one of the oldest of the terrier breeds. It originates from the Scottish Highlands and Scotland's west coast islands, where it was a very early working dog. Cairns live about 12–17 years and their naturally harsh outer coats come in a range of colours from black to cream, wheaten, grey and brindle. They make great pets if allowed to run off their steam, and are adventurous and loyal. And they like to answer back too.

"Cairns are known for having a language of their own," Morgan says. "If I tell Boots off when he's naughty, he'll give a little growl. I'll say, 'No, Boots!'... and he just comes back with another cheeky growl!"

Visit cairnterrier.org.au or cairnsnsw.com



well, connected

FOR SAM SMITH AND THE FINO TEAM, OPENING A NEW RESTAURANT IN THE BAROSSA VALLEY WAS EASIER THAN EXPECTED, THANKS TO A GOOD FRIEND WITH LOCAL KNOWLEDGE.

RECIPES **SAM SMITH** WORDS **CERI DAVID**
PHOTOGRAPHY **LISA COHEN** STYLING **LEESA O'REILLY**



SAM SMITH **COUNTRY CHEF**

Slow-cooked lamb shoulder with carrots & sheep's milk yoghurt (recipe page 101) The 2013 Oyster Bay Merlot hits the spot with its soft, spicy varietal character, stylish balance and food-friendly tannin structure. **FACING PAGE** After four years in the kitchen at Fino Willunga, Sam Smith was entrusted with the head chef's job at the Seppeltsfield restaurant.

RECIPE TESTING DIXIE ELLIOTT
WINE SUGGESTIONS ROB INGRAM

MUCH LIKE SAYING goodbye to a treasured old pair of boots, moving on from Fino in Willunga, south of Adelaide, was bittersweet for restaurant owners David Swain and Sharon Romeo. They ran the McLaren Vale gem for almost a decade. "We realised we were outgrowing it," David says. "So we started looking for a new site and it wasn't easy."

There was a chance those comfy boots might be upgraded to teetering power heels as they toyed with the idea of an urban setting. "We quickly decided that we didn't want to be in the city — we love working deep in a community," David says.

In November 2014 a second Fino opened at Seppeltsfield winery in the Barossa Valley. It's bigger than the original, but the philosophy is the same. "Local produce by local farmers, allowing beautiful produce to shine without doing much to it."

For Sam Smith, who was sous chef at Willunga before he was installed as Seppeltsfield's head chef, the focus on simplicity is what drew him to Fino. "It struck me whenever I ate there — the courage David had to let an ingredient like asparagus or green beans stand out as the main component," he says. "I found it refreshing and liberating, especially when there was a lot of pressure to overcomplicate things."

Of course, moving to a different region meant starting from scratch in terms of building relationships with local growers. "Everyone in McLaren Vale said, 'They'll hate you, because you're not local. It'll take 20 years before they acknowledge you' — but it wasn't quite that hard," David says with a laugh.

No doubt there was a fair bit of scaremongering, but it didn't hurt that good friend Maggie Beer took him under her wing, introducing him to "every amazing grower up here".

Sam and his young family recently relocated to the area. "I'd been commuting from Adelaide, but having a connection to the place is important in a regional restaurant," he says. "Now my five-year-old daughter goes to school with the children of the people who supply our lamb. All those connections happen through the community, not just through work."

When Fino Willunga finally closed in January, its offspring at Seppeltsfield was in full swing. While tears have been shed for the old Fino, this new generation clearly fits like a dream.

Fino at Seppeltsfield is at 730 Seppeltsfield Road, Seppeltsfield, SA. (08) 8562 8528; fino.net.au



Buttermilk flatbread with eggplant, zucchini, capers & salted ricotta A drier style of rosé, the 2015 Chapel Hill Sangiovese Rosé has good acidity and pomegranate notes. **BELOW** The restaurant is housed in Seppeltsfield's original bottling hall.





BUTTERMILK FLATBREAD WITH EGGPLANT, ZUCCHINI, CAPERS & SALTED RICOTTA

Serves 4

¾ cup buttermilk
2 teaspoons instant dried yeast
2 cups bread flour*
½ teaspoon salt
2 large ripe tomatoes
2 large eggplant
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 large red onion, peeled, diced
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 zucchini
20g rocket
2 teaspoons small salted capers, rinsed
2 teaspoons caper leaves**
100g salted ricotta, grated***

Whisk buttermilk and yeast in a jug until combined. Sift flour and salt into a bowl and make a well in centre. Pour buttermilk mixture into well and mix until combined. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside in a warm, draught-free place for 30 minutes to rise.

Meanwhile, cut a small shallow cross in base of each tomato. Place in a heatproof bowl and cover with boiling water. Stand for 30 seconds or until skin just begins to peel. Drain, then refresh in iced water. Drain. Use your fingers to carefully remove and discard tomato skin. Roughly chop tomatoes.

Preheat a chargrill over a high heat. Prick eggplants all over with a skewer or knife. Chargrill, turning often, for 20 minutes or until skin is blackened and eggplant is soft. Cut eggplant in half. Using a large spoon, scrape out flesh in long strips.

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a frying pan over a medium-low heat. Cook onion, stirring occasionally, for 8 minutes or until light golden. Add tomato and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until just softened. Remove from heat. Fold in eggplant flesh. Add 2 tablespoons of remaining oil and 1 tablespoon of lemon juice, and toss to combine. Season with salt and cover to keep warm.

Preheat oven to 230°C. Heat a large pizza stone or baking tray in oven.

Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and divide into 4 equal portions. Roll out dough portions into 17cm-long ovals. Place 2 flatbreads on hot pizza stone and bake for 2 minutes or until light golden underneath. Turn and bake for a further 2 minutes or until light golden and cooked through. Keep warm. Repeat with remaining flatbread.

Meanwhile, using a vegetable peeler, peel zucchini lengthways into ribbons. Combine zucchini, rocket, capers and caper leaves in a bowl. Drizzle with remaining oil and remaining lemon juice, and gently toss to combine. Season to taste with salt.

Place hot flatbread on serving plates. Spoon eggplant mixture onto flatbread and top with zucchini salad. Sprinkle with salted ricotta and serve.

**Also called bakers' flour, it's available at supermarkets and gourmet food stores.*
***Caper leaves are pickled in brine and bottled in white wine vinegar. Available at gourmet food stores and delicatessens or online at kolophoncapers.com.au*
****Also known as* ricotta salata, *this aged semi-hard cheese is available at delicatessens and Italian grocers. Substitute parmesan or pecorino.*

SLOW-COOKED LAMB SHOULDER WITH CARROTS & SHEEP'S MILK YOGHURT

Serves 4 *(See photograph, page 99)*

1 tablespoon dry sherry
1 tablespoon red capsicum paste*
1 teaspoon smoked Spanish paprika**
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon finely ground black pepper
1 whole preserved lemon, chopped
1 garlic bulb, cloves separated, peeled, chopped
⅔ cup sheep's milk yoghurt
1kg boneless lamb shoulder, cut into 12 pieces
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 carrot, roughly chopped
1 celery stick, roughly chopped
1 brown onion, peeled, roughly chopped
6 ripe tomatoes, roughly chopped
8–10 cups chicken stock
2 bunches baby (Dutch) carrots, trimmed, scrubbed
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
½ cup pearl barley
4 pickled long red chillies
½ bunch coriander, sprigs picked
½ bunch mint, leaves picked

Place sherry, capsicum paste, paprika, ground coriander, pepper, preserved lemon, garlic and 1 tablespoon of yoghurt in a small food processor, and process until a smooth paste forms. Place lamb in a ceramic baking dish and pour over yoghurt mixture. Cover with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator overnight to marinate.

Preheat oven to 160°C. Heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil in a large, deep flameproof casserole pan over a medium heat. Cook one-third of lamb, stirring occasionally, for 8 minutes or until browned all over. Transfer to a large plate. Repeat, in 2 batches, with remaining lamb, adding more olive oil as required. Return lamb to casserole pan. Add carrot, celery, onion, tomatoes and enough stock to cover lamb. Bring to a simmer over a medium-high heat. Cover casserole pan with a lid or tight-fitting foil and transfer to oven. Bake for 2–2½ hours or until lamb is tender. Set aside, uncovered, for 20 minutes to cool slightly.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer lamb to a bowl. Strain cooking liquid through a fine sieve set over a bowl. Discard solids. Return cooking liquid to casserole pan and place over a high heat. Simmer for 30 minutes or until cooking liquid is reduced by half. Season to taste. Return lamb to casserole pan. Cook for 5 minutes or until heated through.

Meanwhile, increase oven temperature to 180°C. Place baby carrots in a large roasting pan. Add 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil and toss to coat. Season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Roast for 20 minutes or until tender.

Place barley in a fine sieve and rinse under cold running water. Place barley and 3 cups water in a medium saucepan over a high heat. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes or until barley is tender. Drain and rinse under cold running water. Drain well. Transfer barley to a bowl. Add remaining extra virgin olive oil and toss to combine. Season to taste with sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper. >





LEFT Fino's owners — restaurant manager Sharon Romeo and executive chef David Swain — at their Barossa Valley restaurant. **BELOW** The new Fino is bigger and brighter, but the philosophy of showcasing local produce remains the same.

Spoon lamb among serving bowls and top with remaining yoghurt. Arrange whole pickled chillies and baby carrots over yoghurt. Top with coriander and mint, and sprinkle with barley mixture.

**Available at some supermarkets, and at gourmet food stores, delicatessens and Middle Eastern grocers.*

***Available at gourmet food stores and delicatessens.*

PISTACHIO & OLIVE OIL CAKE WITH YOGHURT GELATO & RASPBERRIES

Serves 4

½ cup caster sugar
⅓ cup pistachio kernels
⅓ cup raw almonds
2 tablespoons polenta
2 tablespoons fine rice flour
½ teaspoon baking powder
1 egg
¼ cup olive oil
50g unsalted butter, softened
½ lemon, rind finely grated, juiced
½ lime, rind finely grated, juiced
⅓ cup plain (unsweetened) natural yoghurt
3 x 125g punnets raspberries
extra ¼ cup pistachio kernels, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

YOGHURT GELATO

⅓ cup verjuice*
1 lemon, rind finely grated, juiced
1 lime, rind finely grated, juiced
1 tablespoon glucose syrup
½ cup caster sugar
⅓ sheet titanium-strength leaf gelatine**
½ cup plain (unsweetened) natural yoghurt
⅓ cup pure cream

To make yoghurt gelato, combine verjuice, lemon rind and juice, lime rind and juice, glucose syrup and caster sugar in a small saucepan. Place over a medium heat and stir until sugar dissolves. Bring to boil. Simmer for 10 minutes or until sugar syrup is reduced by half. Remove from heat.

Meanwhile, place gelatine in a bowl of cold water. Stand for 5 minutes or until softened. Squeeze water from gelatine.

Add gelatine to hot sugar syrup and stir until gelatine dissolves. Cool. Transfer to a bowl and refrigerate for 30 minutes or until chilled.

Add yoghurt and cream to sugar syrup, and stir until well combined. Churn yoghurt mixture in an ice-cream machine according to manufacturer's instructions. Transfer to an airtight container and freeze until just firm. If you don't have an ice-cream machine, transfer yoghurt mixture to a shallow metal container. Cover with foil and place in freezer for 4 hours or until firm. Break up gelato with a metal spoon. Transfer to a food processor and process until smooth. Re-freeze. Repeat process twice more or until gelato is smooth and creamy.

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease a 20cm round cake pan and line with baking paper.

Place caster sugar, pistachio kernels, raw almonds, polenta, rice flour and baking powder in a food processor and process until nuts are finely chopped and mixture is well combined. Add egg, olive oil, butter, lemon rind and juice, and lime rind and juice, and process until well combined. Pour mixture into prepared pan and use a spatula to spread evenly. Bake for 30 minutes or until a skewer inserted into centre comes out clean. Cool in pan for 5 minutes, then turn onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Slice cake and roughly break into pieces. Place 1 tablespoon of yoghurt on each serving plate. Arrange cake over yoghurt and top with raspberries. Sprinkle with extra pistachios and top with a scoop of gelato. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and serve.

**The unfermented juice of unripe grapes, verjuice is available at some supermarkets, gourmet food stores and delicatessens. Substitute white wine vinegar.*

***Available at gourmet food stores.* >



Pistachio & olive oil cake with yoghurt gelato & raspberries
Enhance the deliciousness of the dessert with the complexity and fruit, and spice richness of the Seppeltsfield Solero DP63 Grand Muscat.

RECIPE ANNA WOOD

SAFFRON-POACHED CHICKEN, FRIED ONIONS, ALMONDS & VINE LEAVES

Serves 4

6 fresh vine leaves*
2 teaspoons lemon juice
⅔ cup olive oil
1 large brown onion, peeled, thinly sliced
2 teaspoons sea salt flakes
1.2kg whole free-range chicken
12 cups chicken stock
pinch of saffron
1 cinnamon stick
1 teaspoon coriander seeds
1 teaspoon white peppercorns
1 teaspoon sherry vinegar**
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon raw almonds, toasted, roughly chopped
½ bunch coriander, sprigs picked
½ bunch mint, leaves picked
½ cup dill sprigs
1 cup snow pea tendrils***

Blanch vine leaves in a small saucepan of salted boiling water for 30 seconds or until just softened. Using a slotted spoon, transfer vine leaves to a bowl of iced water. Drain and pat dry with paper towel. Place vine leaves in a shallow bowl. Add lemon juice and 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Set aside for 2 hours or preferably overnight to marinate. Drain. Using a small sharp knife, remove and discard middle stalks. Finely slice leaves.

Place onion in a bowl and sprinkle with sea salt. Stand for 15 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold running water. Squeeze onion to remove as much liquid as possible. Heat remaining olive oil in a small, deep frying pan over a medium-high heat. Cook onion for 8 minutes or until brown. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel.

To clean chicken, rub cavity with salt and rinse under cold running water. Place stock, saffron, cinnamon stick, coriander seeds and white peppercorns in a large stockpot and bring to boil over a high heat. Carefully add chicken to hot stock and return to a simmer. Cook for 30 minutes, then remove pan from heat. Cover and stand for 15 minutes. Transfer chicken to a plate.

Strain stock through a fine sieve into a large heatproof bowl. Discard solids. Place 4 cups of stock in a large saucepan and bring to boil over a medium-high heat. Simmer for 20 minutes or until reduced by three-quarters. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Add sherry vinegar and extra virgin olive oil, and stir to combine. Season to taste.

Remove chicken meat from bones and coarsely shred. Discard chicken skin and carcass. Place shredded chicken in a bowl. Add reduced stock mixture and toss to combine. Add vine leaves, almonds, coriander, mint, dill and snow pea tendrils, and toss to combine. Arrange chicken mixture on serving plates and top with fried onion.

**Ensure vine leaves have not been treated with sprays. If fresh vine leaves are not available, substitute drained pickled vine leaves.*

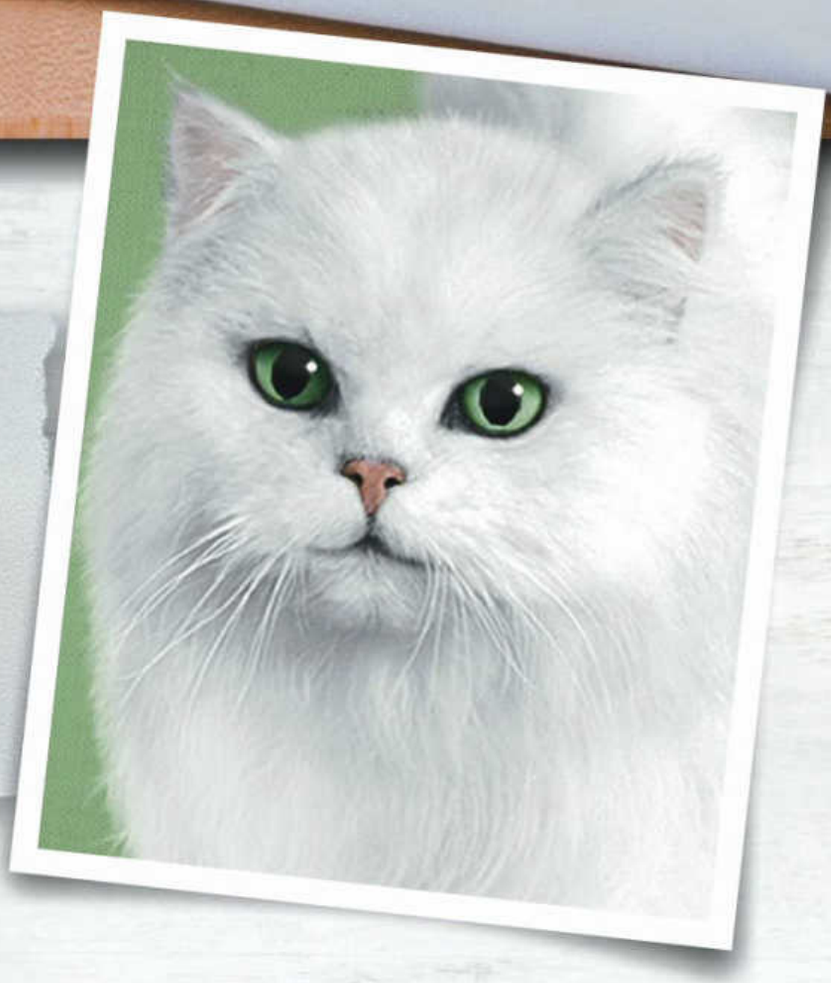
***Available at gourmet food stores and delicatessens. Substitute red wine vinegar.*

****Available at specialty greengrocers, farmers' markets and Asian grocery stores.* CS



Saffron-poached chicken, fried onions, almonds & vine leaves The savoury and complex 2014 Pizzini Pinot Grigio has layers of textures and flavours, and floral, nutty notes that complement this dish.



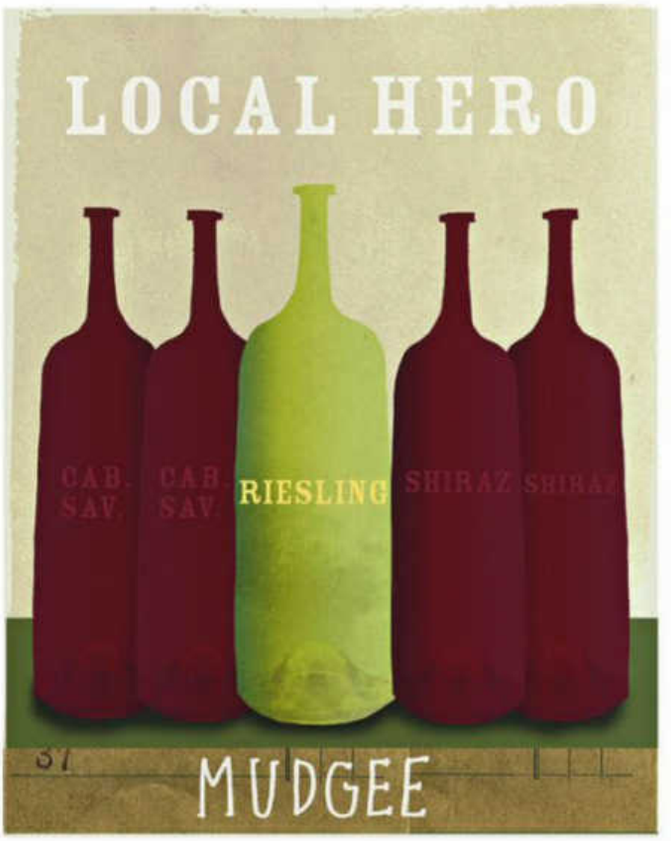




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FAMOUS FOR EVERYTHING

IS IT BIG REDS OR SUPERIOR WHITES? ROB INGRAM LAUDS MUDGEE'S VARIETY.

WINE AUSTRALIA, WHICH promotes and regulates our wine industry, has a strategy in partnership with Dan Murphy's called Local Heroes. The aim is to encourage consumers to buy wine from somewhere rather than anywhere, by promoting a clear association between region and variety.

I like the strategy more than its chances of succeeding, because we're currently seeing a game of musical chairs going on in vineyards and wineries. And, for me, it's happening pretty close to home. Mudgee — to anyone who believes the research — is rich, ripe, red wine country. Ask the NSW Wine Industry Association. It tells us that every wine region in NSW has its own story.

"Integral to these stories are the wines that excel in these unique pockets of land throughout the state," it says. And it lists Mudgee as cabernet sauvignon country.

"Mudgee's reliable summer weather, with hot days and long, cool nights, allows for slower ripening, making Mudgee ideal for producing red wines with great intensity of colour and flavour," it says. "In addition, the rich volcanic soils, with quartz ranging from 430 metres to 1100 metres above sea level, assist in producing wines of depth and character. As a result Mudgee has established a reputation for big, concentrated red wines — in particular, cabernet sauvignon."

Ask Langton's, the wine auction house, which publishes the authoritative *Langton's Australian Fine Wine Guide*. Langton's names Mudgee as an up-and-coming shiraz region, stating, "Mudgee shiraz-cabernet sauvignon is turning heads — the fruity opulence and sweetness of shiraz meshing with the fine, grainy tannin structure of cabernet sauvignon to produce wines with plenty of ageing potential."

And then James Halliday's *Australian Wine Companion*, in a report headed 'The rise and rise of Mudgee riesling', says Jacob Stein has two new wines that have won a number of awards. Stein, of Robert Stein Winery, and David Lowe of Lowe Wine are producing rieslings that are turning the heads of Clare Valley and Eden Valley producers, traditionally the champions of this variety.

So let's look at the show results. Champion Wine of the Show at the 2015 Mudgee Wine Show was Jacob Stein's 2015 Robert Stein Half Dry Riesling. It was a rare double-header because the previous year he had won Champion Wine with his 2014 Robert Stein Reserve Riesling.

In 2015, the Robert Stein Winery picked up a gold, a silver and a bronze with the 2015 Robert Stein Half Dry Riesling, the 2014 Robert Stein Riesling and the 2013 Robert Stein Off-Dry Riesling. Riesling is where the excitement seems to be in Mudgee these days, and it's fast becoming the local hero.

All of this will bring a smile to the face of Miramar Wines' Ian MacRae, who came to Mudgee in the mid-1970s and recognised its potential for great rieslings. He has a host of trophies and medals to prove he was right, but for years he remained a maverick in a community of red producers.

It is particularly interesting, then, that among the current knockout Mudgee rieslings from Robert Stein Winery, the 2015 Robert Stein Riesling includes fruit from MacRae's 43-year-old Miramar Vineyard, along with that from the Stein Estate's own vineyards.

The Half Dry Riesling was sourced entirely from Robert Stein vineyards, which themselves are nearly 40 years old. The grapes were whole bunch pressed, with 20 per cent fermented on skins with natural yeasts and matured in older French barrels.

TOP TIPPLE...

2015 ROBERT STEIN HALF DRY RIESLING, ABOUT $40

Judges at the Mudgee Wine Show rated this wine "a standout". The intense flavours follow the pronounced lime and citrus aromas, and the palate displays both flavour and finesse. A gentle waft of sweetness gives this wine its magic, and it finishes with bright, fresh natural acidity. Get to know a local hero.

ILLUSTRATION ANTONIA PESENTI

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tomatoes

TAMSIN CARVAN TURNS THE FRUITS OF A VERY PRODUCTIVE TOMATO PATCH INTO BEAUTIFUL SOUPS AND SAUCES, AND SQUIRRELS SOME AWAY FOR THE COLDER MONTHS.

WORDS AND RECIPES **TAMSIN CARVAN**
PHOTOGRAPHY **LISA COHEN** STYLING **DEBORAH KALOPER**

There are tomatoes in the strawberry bed, tomatoes in the snow peas, tomatoes under the peach tree, tomatoes everywhere. My superstitious reluctance to pull out those plucky and independent self-sown tomato seedlings has seen them take full advantage of this incredibly warm, dry season, making (even more of) a jungle of my garden — and at the same time creating the most intriguing living map of microclimates and air turbulence on my windy hilltop.

Tomato gardeners know that a little shelter goes a long way, but to see the difference between plants growing in the previously unused space bordered by the tin chook house, the four-and-a-half metre high hedge of *Rosa* 'Mutabilis', that impenetrable barrier of rosemary, and their neighbours — just three metres to the side in the 'proper' tomato bed — is almost enough to spark dreams of polytunnels.

In the right spot, with good soil and consistent moisture, it takes surprisingly few plants to become almost completely self-sufficient in tomatoes (a decade ago, tomatoes were one of the first things I decided never to buy again). My favourite way of preserving them is by 'squishing' chopped fruit, with seeds and skin intact, into Fowlers Vacola jars, so they're effectively preserved in their own juice. It's simple, quick and preserves all the colour and flavour for when you need it most — in mid winter, tumbling a jar of 'squished' tomatoes into a pan has serious therapeutic value. I aim to tuck away 60 No. 20 Vacola jars every year, which is equivalent to just 12 to 15 large bowls of fruit. Even a modest tomato patch will yield enough fruit to fill a significant quantity of jars, and with a little practice and effort you may never have to buy canned tomatoes again.

Having a few different tomato varieties to choose from means not only a beautiful array of colours, but deeper and more interesting flavours. It's worth experimenting to find out which variety works best for you, but my favourites are Black Russian, Brown Berry, Costoluto Genovese, Ananas Noir and Jaune Flammee. A simple pasta sauce made from Jaune Flammee tomatoes cooked with a little garlic and crushed raw almonds is one of my favourite things in the world to eat. You'll just have to grow them to find out why!

A large range of heirloom tomato seeds are available from The Diggers Club, (03) 5984 7900; diggers.com.au. Cook, farmer and gardener Tamsin Carvan hosts cooking workshops and seasonal lunches at her farm at Poowong East in Victoria's Gippsland. For information, visit tamsinstable.com.au

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY **MARK ROPER** FOOD PREPARATION AND RECIPE TESTING **TIFFANY PAGE**



Smoked tomato, ricotta & crème fraîche tart (recipe page 110)

SMOKED TOMATO, RICOTTA & CREME FRAICHE TART

Serves 4–6 *(See photograph, page 109)*

This pretty and delicate tart sounds complicated to make but it really isn't. If you don't have a wood-fired barbecue, just roast the tomatoes in the oven and use a little apple wood smoked sea salt (or similar) to give you that rich smoky flavour.

600–700g (2 bunches) small-to-medium, ripe truss tomatoes
1 small bunch thyme
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon sea salt flakes or apple wood smoked sea salt*
2 garlic cloves, peeled, roughly chopped
150g fresh ricotta
200ml crème fraîche
2 large (about 70g each) free-range eggs
2 sheets good-quality puff pastry
50g hard sheep's milk cheese, crumbled
green salad, to serve (optional)

Place a large sheet of foil on a work surface. Top with a second sheet of foil. Place tomatoes and a few thyme sprigs on foil. Fold up edges of foil so tomatoes are almost enclosed (this will contain cooking juices). Leave top open so tomatoes absorb smoky flavours and roast rather than stew, as you want them to hold their shape. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar and oil.

If using a wood or kettle barbecue, start fire 30 minutes before cooking tomatoes so they cook slowly over a low fire of hot coals to which you can add wood chips, or woody rosemary sprigs, for extra smoke and flavour. Sprinkle with sea salt flakes. Place foil pouch containing tomatoes on grill. Cook for 15–45 minutes or until tomatoes are caramelised but still hold their shape. Alternatively, preheat oven to 175°C. Sprinkle tomatoes with apple wood smoked sea salt. Place foil pouch on a baking tray and roast for 30 minutes or until caramelised.

Whisk together garlic, ricotta and crème fraîche in a bowl until combined. Season to taste with sea salt. Add eggs and beat until combined. Set aside at room temperature until required.

Preheat oven to 175°C. Lightly grease a 30cm x 10cm tart pan with removable base. Place pastry sheets side by side, with edges overlapping slightly, on a lightly floured work surface. Roll out gently, focusing on join, to make 1 large pastry sheet. Line prepared pan with pastry and trim any excess.

Place pan on a baking tray. Crumble sheep's milk cheese over base of tart case. Top with 2–3 of remaining thyme sprigs. Pour crème fraîche mixture into tart case. (Ideally you should see a little of cheese and thyme poking out.) Top with a few remaining thyme sprigs, if desired. Bake for 25–30 minutes or until edges of pastry are browned and filling is just set (filling will continue to cook a little after tart is removed from oven). Cool for 10 minutes. Remove tart from pan and transfer to a serving platter. Top with smoked truss tomatoes. Pour any tomato juices into a serving jug. Serve tart with tomato juices and a green salad, if desired.

**Available at gourmet food stores and specialty spice shops.*

ORECCHIETTE WITH TOMATOES, CRUSHED ALMONDS & BASIL

Serves 6

This is one of my favourite dishes in summer and one of the most requested recipes from our lunches. We love it in winter too, substituting our own bottled tomatoes for the fresh fruit — just omit the basil.

1 cup raw almonds
50g unsalted butter
4 garlic cloves, peeled, roughly chopped
1–2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1kg mixed tomatoes, roughly chopped
1 small handful basil leaves, torn
finely grated parmesan, to serve
extra basil leaves, to garnish
1 lemon, halved, to serve

ORECCHIETTE

250g plain flour or 00 plain flour*
150g semola durum wheat flour**
1 teaspoon finely ground sea salt

To make orecchiette, combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Add ½ cup cold tap water and mix with a fork until just combined. Use your hands to bring mixture together, squeezing dough through your fingers so it really takes up moisture and forms a rough, stiff dough. Add more water, if required. Shape into a disc and cover with plastic wrap. Rest for 15 minutes. (The dough will soften during resting, so be sure not to make it too wet or it will be hard to shape.)

Knead dough on an unfloured surface for 3–5 minutes or until still stiff, but shiny and pliable. (Your work surface will not require flouring if consistency of dough is right. If dough sticks to work surface it is too wet.) Divide dough into 4 equal portions. Wrap 3 dough portions in plastic wrap to prevent them drying out. Working quickly, roll remaining dough portion into a log, about 1cm in diameter. Cut log into 5mm-thick discs. Using blunt edge of a butter knife, press down on cut side of pasta disc, and drag disc towards you so dough curls over back of knife. Push index finger into centre of disc and turn it inside out to create an ear-like shape that's thinner on top than at sides. Place orecchiette, in a single layer, on a tea towel and lightly dust with flour. Repeat with remaining dough portions.

Place a large stockpot of salted water over a high heat. Bring to boil. Add orecchiette and gently stir to separate. Return to boil, then cook for a further 1–2 minutes or until orecchiette start to rise to surface. (Orecchiette are best when cooked through but still have a little 'bite'.) Drain.

Meanwhile, place almonds in a mortar and pound with a pestle until mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Place butter, garlic and 1–2 tablespoons of olive oil in a frying pan over a very low heat. Cook for 2–3 minutes or until fragrant. Add tomatoes, basil and a large pinch of sea salt. Increase heat to medium and cook for 10–12 minutes or until tomatoes are broken down.

Just before draining orecchiette, stir crushed almonds into tomato sauce.

Add orecchiette to tomato sauce and toss to combine. Spoon among warmed serving plates. Top with parmesan and garnish with extra basil. Season with a squeeze of lemon juice and sea salt.

**Available at supermarkets and delicatessens.*

***Available at some delicatessens and Italian grocers. Substitute plain flour or 00 plain flour.* >



Orecchiette with tomatoes,
crushed almonds & basil



Rich tomato & eggplant ragu with roast chook
(recipe page 115)

FRESH TOMATO SOUP

Serves 6–8

This soup is a celebration of the home garden tomato. Use a mixture of different varieties and include a few meaty black tomatoes such as Black Russian, which give a beautiful texture and depth of flavour to the soup. I always leave skins on and seeds in — remove them and you'll remove much of their delicate flavour.

2kg perfectly ripe mixed tomatoes, such as truss and Roma
3–4 large garlic cloves, peeled, finely chopped
2 teaspoons coarse sea salt
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 large bunch basil, leaves picked
150g bocconcini, roughly torn
extra virgin olive oil, to serve (optional)
crusty sourdough, to serve (optional)

Roughly chop tomatoes. Place chopped tomatoes and juices in a large bowl. Add garlic, sea salt and 2 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil, and gently toss to combine. Stand, turning gently now and again, for 20–30 minutes or until tomatoes release their juices.

Using your hands, gently squash chopped tomatoes until mixture develops a soupy texture. (You can leave it chunky or make it as fine as you wish.)

Reserve a small handful of basil leaves to garnish soup. Roughly tear remaining basil leaves. Add torn basil to tomato mixture and gently toss to combine.

Place bocconcini and remaining extra virgin olive oil in a bowl. Season with sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper. Gently toss to combine.

Spoon soup among shallow serving bowls. Top with bocconcini and garnish with reserved basil leaves. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil, if desired. Serve tomato soup at room temperature with crusty sourdough, if desired. >



"With a little practice... you may never have to buy canned tomatoes again."

'Squished' tomatoes

'SQUISHED' TOMATOES

Makes 6 x 600ml jars

Preserving tomatoes using this method means all the colour and delicate fresh flavour are retained. However, you will need a Fowlers preserving unit and Vacola jars. For information, visit fowlersvacola.com.au

3–3.5kg perfectly ripe (but not overripe) tomatoes, such as a mixture of cherry and meaty varieties, washed
6 x No. 20 Vacola preserving jars with size 3 preserving rings, lids and clips
3 teaspoons citric acid or 1½ tablespoons strained lemon juice

Cut large tomatoes into quarters and cherry tomatoes in half, taking care to cut out any bruises or bad spots.

Preserving jars must be very clean but do not need to be sterilised (the bottling process acts as sterilisation stage). Soak preserving rings in warm water for a few minutes or until softened. Stretch rings onto jars, ensuring rings are not twisted.

Place a few tomato pieces, cut-sides down, in base of a jar. Using handle of a wooden spoon, gently push down on skin sides of tomato pieces to release juices (take care not to squash them too much). Repeat until tomato pieces are 1.5cm below top of jar and juices cover tomato flesh. (You should have a very tightly packed jar of tomato pieces in own juices with no air pockets.) Repeat with remaining jars and tomato pieces.

Add ½ teaspoon citric acid or 1 teaspoon strained lemon juice to each jar. (The acid levels are critical to the preserving process so do not omit this step.) Wipe rims of jars with a clean cloth to remove any juice or seeds. Seal with lids and clips.

Place jars in a Fowlers preserving unit and add enough cold water to cover lids by at least 1cm. Place lid on unit and set thermostat to 94°C. Heat jars, checking regularly to ensure water isn't boiling, for 60–75 minutes or according to manufacturer's instructions.

Transfer jars to a wooden board. Leaving clips in place, press down on centre of lids with a tea towel to ensure a proper seal. Set aside for 12–18 hours to cool completely. Remove clips and check vacuum seal. Label, date and store in a cool, dry place for up to 12 months.

RICH TOMATO & EGGPLANT RAGU WITH ROAST CHOOK

Serves 8 *(See photograph, page 112)*

My favourite eggplant are the stripey heirloom variety Listada di Gandia, but any fresh, firm and glossy fruit will do.

6–7 medium-to-large eggplant, thinly sliced lengthways
¼ cup sea salt flakes
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
4 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed, chopped
1kg perfectly ripe small truss or heirloom tomatoes, halved
2 long red chillies, sliced
1 large handful mint leaves, torn
1 large handful coriander sprigs, leaves picked, torn
½ lemon
parsley, mint and coriander sprigs, to serve
3–4 wedges preserved lemon*

ROAST CHOOK

1.7kg whole organic chicken
½ lemon
3 rosemary stalks
1–2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
175g unsalted butter, softened
1 large handful parsley leaves, roughly chopped
1 garlic clove, peeled, finely chopped
1 teaspoon sea salt flakes
extra 2–3 rosemary stalks, leaves picked, roughly chopped
1–2 cups white wine or chicken stock

Place eggplant slices in 2 colanders. Stand colanders in deep trays or set over bowls. Sprinkle eggplant slices with sea salt flakes and toss to combine. Set aside for 25–30 minutes to drain. (This process of 'disgorging' helps remove bitterness from eggplants, however, this step is not necessary with a lot of modern varieties.)

Preheat oven to 175°C. Rinse eggplant under cold running water and pat dry with paper towel. Preheat a chargrill pan over a very high heat. Brush eggplant slices with olive oil and season with salt. Grill eggplant, in batches, for 3–5 minutes each side or until skin is blackened and flesh is soft and well coloured. Place eggplant in a large baking dish and pour over remaining olive oil. Add garlic, tomatoes, chilli and a generous pinch of salt, and toss to combine. Bake for 50–60 minutes or until tomatoes look 'syrupy' and sauce is reduced. Cool slightly. Add mint and coriander, and stir to combine. Season to taste with sea salt and a squeeze of lemon juice.

Meanwhile, to make roast chook, if time permits, place chicken on a tray lined with paper towel. Refrigerate, uncovered, overnight to dry out skin. Set aside for 1–2 hours before cooking to bring to room temperature.

Preheat oven to 200°C. Squeeze juice of lemon over chicken and rub into skin. Place squeezed lemon and rosemary sprigs in cavity of chicken. Drizzle olive oil over chicken and rub into skin until it feels greasy.

Place butter, parsley, garlic, sea salt flakes and extra rosemary in a bowl, and use your fingers to combine into a soft workable mixture. Gently ease skin from flesh of 1 chicken breast and carefully pack in half of butter mixture, easing it right back to start of thigh so it covers all of breast meat. Repeat with other breast and remaining butter mixture. Using kitchen string, tie legs together. Season well.

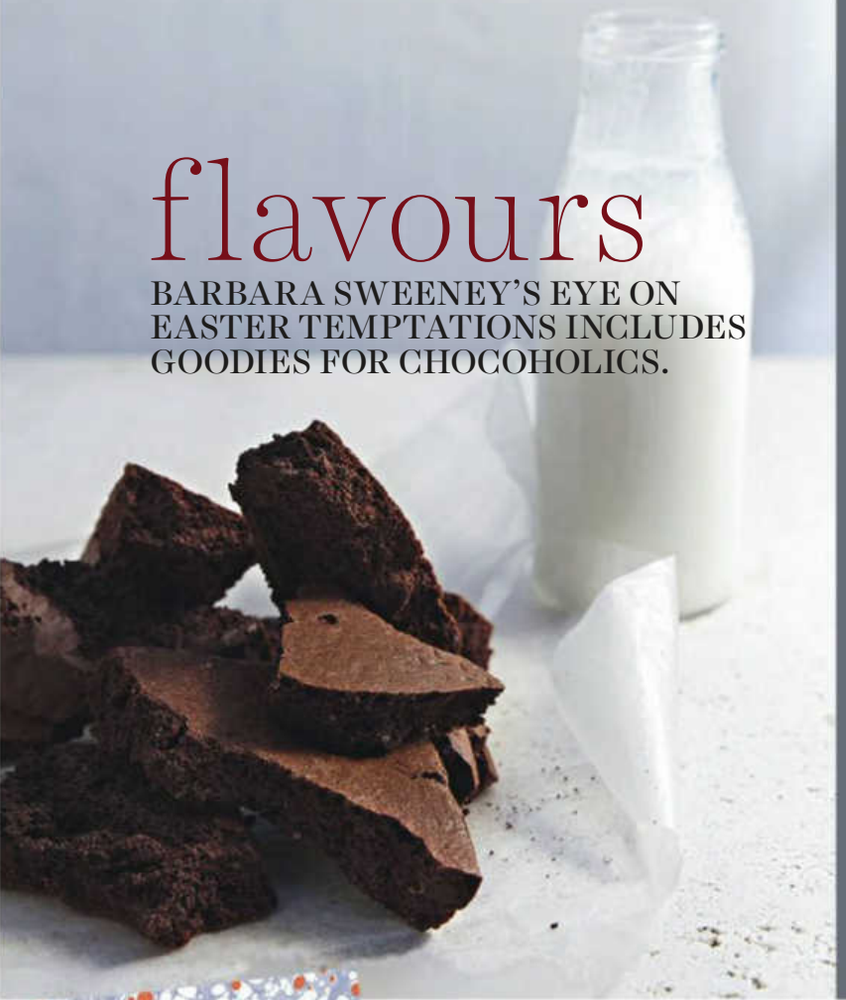
Place chicken on its side in a greased roasting pan or baking dish. Pour 1 cup of wine, stock or water into base of roasting pan (avoid pouring liquid on chicken). Roast for 30 minutes or until uppermost side of chicken is well browned. Turn chicken onto other side and roast for a further 30 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 170°C. Turn chicken onto its back and top up wine, stock or water, if required. Roast, breast-side up, for 30 minutes or until internal temperature of thickest part of thigh reaches 70°C or juices run clear when a skewer is inserted into thigh. Remove from oven. Turn chicken breast-side down in roasting pan (so juices run into breast meat rather than away from it). Cover with foil and set aside for 20–30 minutes to rest.

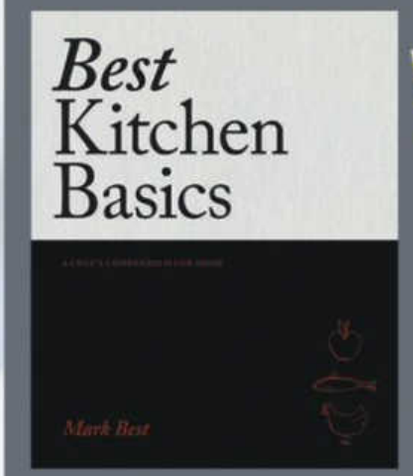
To serve, mix resting juices from chicken into ragu. Spoon ragu onto a warmed serving platter and top with parsley, mint and coriander sprigs. Place chicken on platter. Serve with wedges of preserved lemon.

**Available at gourmet food stores and delicatessens.*

flavours

BARBARA SWEENEY'S EYE ON EASTER TEMPTATIONS INCLUDES GOODIES FOR CHOCOHOLICS.





SIMPLY, THE BEST

Sydney chef Mark Best, the owner of Marque and Pei Modern, puts both his best classic and inventive feet forward in *Best Kitchen Basics* (Hardie Grant Books, $60). Mark reworks kitchen staples such as roast chicken, pea and ham soup and banana bread, and introduces not-so-basic kitchen basics such as cheese custard, cured egg yolk and parsnip cornettos, with sophisticated aplomb. Styling by regular *Country Style* contributor Geraldine Muñoz makes the book a visual feast, too. Try Mark's killer recipe for dried chocolate mousse (left). Yes, it's the best.



HIGH FIVE

A five-bar sampler collection, $40.91, gives you a taste of the chocolate made by Simeon Crawley at Bright Chocolate Bean to Bar in Bright, Victoria, so you can compare the flavour of fresh spiced Trinidad (above) with earthy Dominican Republic. (03) 5750 1235; brightchocolate.com.au





ADVENTURES IN FLORENCE

Plunge headlong into Australian blogger Emiko Davies' first-hand account of the "stubbornly but comfortingly unchanging" food of Florence in *Florentine: The True Cuisine of Florence* (Hardie Grant Books, $49.95), a warm and engaging discovery of a city through its food. Emiko draws on history and her experience living in the Renaissance City to tell the story behind each dish. You'll be instructed how to prepare the city's famed *bistecca alla Fiorentina* (T-bone steak), be delighted by the exquisite paper marbling on the cover and learn the address of Emiko's favourite gelateria. You can be sure that the recipes work — readers of Emiko's blog, including me, road-tested them. I scored *topino di patate* (above), a potato gnocchi variant which was simple to make and, like all the recipes, quite elegant. Emiko launches the book with events in Sydney and Melbourne until mid-March. emikodavies.com

MEET THE PRODUCER

Tim Davies, Daintree Estates, Mossman, Qld



Cocoa beans grown in Far North Queensland are used to produce Daintree Estate chocolate, making it one of a kind in Australia. "There are 13 growers from the Atherton Tablelands to Innisfail," explains company secretary Tim Davies. "The cocoa beans are processed in Mossman, where they're fermented, dried, roasted, cracked and winnowed."

The range includes a 70 per cent Goodman Estate single-origin dark chocolate, dark milk chocolate flavoured with pink salt from western Victoria, wine bars... and even Chilli Chocolate Finishing Oil (left). "The beans we grow are fruity with little bitterness, so we make a higher cocoa-content chocolate with less sugar," he says.

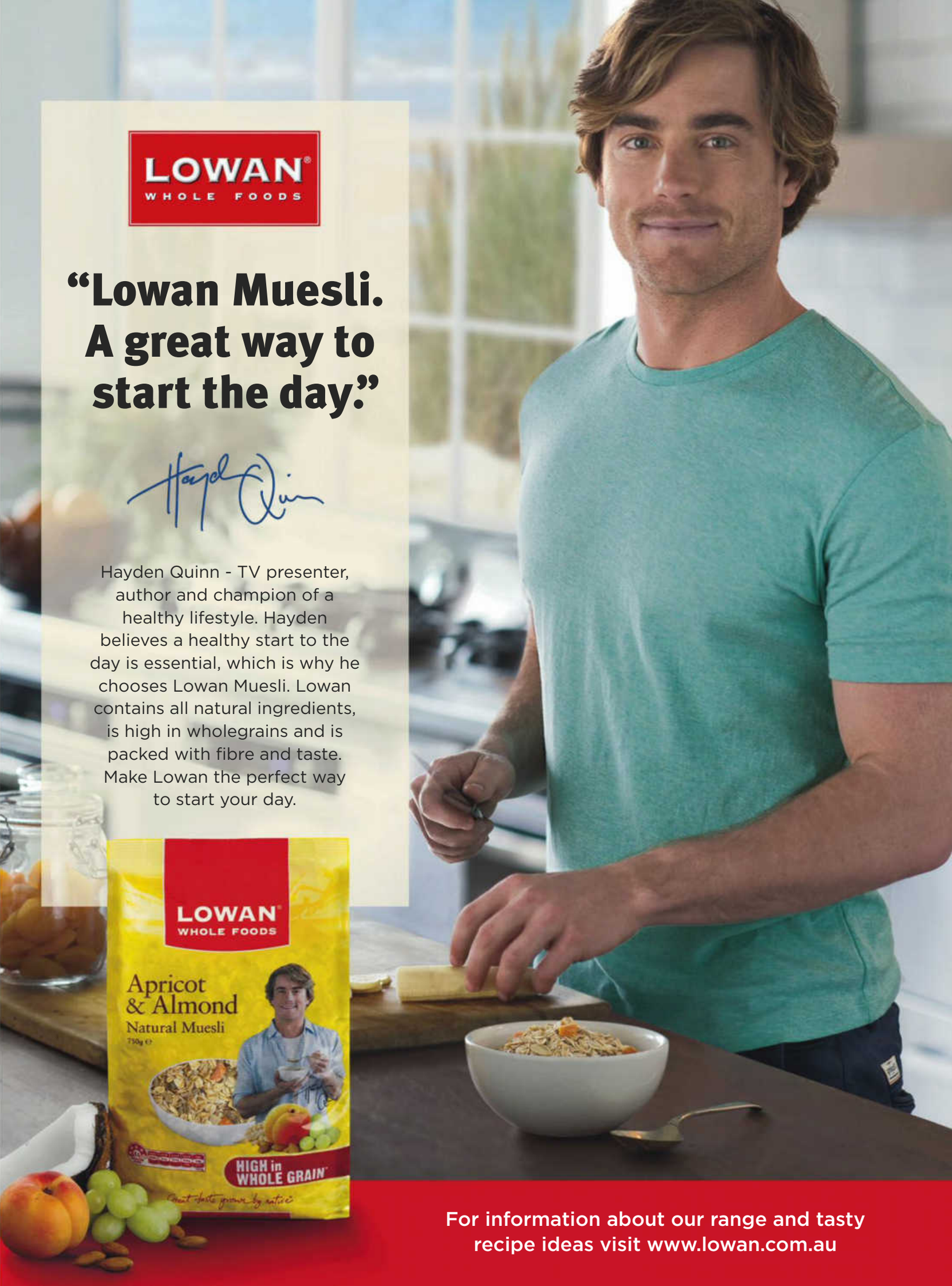
As the business grows, so do the opportunities. "We have a responsibility to share our research and knowledge — on fermentation techniques, improved efficiencies, equipment design and development — with our cocoa-growing neighbours," Tim says. "We're a cocoa bean producer that makes good chocolate. We want to find different ways to use cocoa." *daintreeestates.com*



MAIN PHOTOGRAPH **PETRINA TINSLAY** STYLING **GERALDINE MUÑOZ**
PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY **GUY BAILEY**



CODE RED Redbelly's Red Orange Blood Orange Marmalade, $11, made from ruby-red fruit grown by the Mancini family in the NSW Riverina, can be used as a glaze for roast duck, as well as on breakfast toast... perfect! redbellycitrus.com.au


LOWAN
WHOLE FOODS
"Lowan Muesli. A great way to start the day."
Hayden Quinn - TV presenter, author and champion of a healthy lifestyle. Hayden believes a healthy start to the day is essential, which is why he chooses Lowan Muesli. Lowan contains all natural ingredients, is high in wholegrains and is packed with fibre and taste. Make Lowan the perfect way to start your day.
LOWAN
WHOLE FOODS
Apricot & Almond
Natural Muesli
HIGH in WHOLE GRAIN
For information about our range and tasty recipe ideas visit www.lowan.com.au



happy easter

OUR CRAFT PROJECTS AND RECIPES FOR DELICIOUS TREATS WILL CHARM YOUNG AND OLD ALIKE.

RECIPES, CRAFTS, PHOTOGRAPHY AND STYLING **CHINA SQUIRREL**

RECIPE TESTING **DIXIE ELLIOTT**



Dyed Easter eggs (instructions on page 120). **FACING PAGE Easter bunny mask** (instructions on page 124).

DYED EASTER EGGS

These dyed eggs make beautiful decorations on your Easter table. You can reuse the vegetable dyes to make as many coloured eggs as you like. For best results, don't overcrowd the jars and ensure the eggs are fully submerged in dye. To obtain the truest colours, use eggs with white or very pale brown shells — they're available at farmers' markets and organic grocery shops.

Materials

white vinegar
salt
small flowers, leaves and fern fronds
white shelled hard-boiled eggs, at room temperature
square pieces of nylon stocking or pantihose to cover eggs
twist ties

Blue vegetable dye

3 cups tightly packed chopped red cabbage

Orange vegetable dye

3 cups tightly packed brown onion skins

Brown vegetable dye

3 cups tightly packed red onion skins

Maroon vegetable dye

3 cups tightly packed chopped beetroot

To make blue vegetable dye, place red cabbage in a medium saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to boil over a high heat. Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes.

Strain cooking liquid through a fine sieve into a heatproof bowl. Discard cabbage. Stir 2 tablespoons vinegar and 3 teaspoons salt into hot cooking liquid. Set aside for 10 minutes to cool, then pour into a large glass jar.

Repeat process to make orange, brown and maroon vegetable dyes.

Position a flower, leaf or fern frond on side of a hard-boiled egg (place flowers face-down on eggs). Without disturbing your floral decoration, carefully wrap egg in a square of nylon stocking, then pull edges of fabric together until decoration is held firmly in place. Twist ends of fabric together and secure with a twist tie. Repeat with remaining eggs.

Using a slotted spoon, carefully add eggs to dyes so they are completely submerged (do not overcrowd jars). Stand, stirring occasionally to ensure an even colour, until eggs reach desired shade. (The longer you leave them the darker they will become, but the colour will fade a little when the eggs dry.)

Remove eggs from dyes, then remove stocking fabric and floral decorations. Place eggs on a wire rack to dry.



CHOCOLATE BOX CAKE

Makes 4

We flavoured our truffles with vanilla bean paste but you can substitute with your choice of liqueur, if desired.

1½ cups plain flour
½ cup unsweetened good-quality cocoa
¾ teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
pinch of salt
1½ cups caster sugar
¾ cup canola oil
3 eggs
¾ cup cold mashed potato
¾ cup buttermilk

CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

600g good-quality dark chocolate, grated or finely chopped
300ml pure cream
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste
½ cup cocoa, sifted
64 x 5cm-diameter rounds of tissue paper

CHOCOLATE BOX WALLS

200g dark chocolate

CHOCOLATE GANACHE

120g good-quality dark chocolate, grated or finely chopped
75ml pure cream

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease a deep 20cm square cake pan and line with baking paper.

Sift flour, cocoa, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt together into a bowl. Place sugar, oil and eggs in a separate bowl and whisk until well combined. Add mashed potato and whisk until smooth. Alternately fold in flour mixture and buttermilk, finishing with flour mixture until smooth and combined. Spoon into prepared pan. Bake for 40–45 minutes or until a skewer inserted into centre comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes, then turn onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Using a serrated knife, trim top of cake so it is level with sides. Cut cake into four 9cm square cakes.

To make chocolate truffles, place chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Place cream in a small saucepan and bring just to a simmer over a medium heat. Pour hot cream over chocolate. Set aside for 3 minutes, then stir until smooth and well combined. Add vanilla bean paste and stir to combine. Place chocolate mixture, uncovered, in refrigerator for 1 hour or until firm.

Using clean hands, roll 1 teaspoonful of chocolate mixture into a ball. Place on a tray lined with baking paper. Repeat with remaining chocolate mixture to make 64 balls. Store in refrigerator until required.

To make chocolate box walls, cut out twenty 9cm x 6cm pieces of baking paper (allow an extra 4 for breakages).

Place chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan half-filled with simmering water (make sure bowl does not touch water), and stir with a metal spoon until melted and smooth. Remove from heat.

Place one 9cm x 6cm piece of baking paper on a lined chopping board. Using a palette knife, spread 1 tablespoon of melted chocolate over paper rectangle to cover. Transfer to a lined baking tray. Repeat with remaining paper rectangles and chocolate. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until set. Carefully remove paper from each chocolate rectangle. (If paper has curled, causing chocolate rectangle to curve slightly, turn chocolate rectangle over on tray and set aside at room temperature until flat.) Refrigerate until ready to use.

To make chocolate ganache, place chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Place cream in a small saucepan and bring just to a simmer over a medium heat. Pour hot cream over chocolate. Set aside for 3 minutes, then stir until smooth. Set aside at room temperature for 30–40 minutes to cool or until ganache is thick but not hard.

To assemble, place 1 cake on a board lined with baking paper. Thinly spread sides of cake with chocolate ganache and gently fix 4 chocolate rectangles to sides so it resembles a box. Repeat with remaining cakes, ganache and chocolate rectangles. Refrigerate for 15 minutes or until set.

Meanwhile, sift cocoa into a shallow dish. Roll truffles in cocoa to coat. Half wrap each truffle in a round of tissue paper and arrange on top of cakes. >





SALTED CHOCOLATE & PEANUT BARK

Makes 30cm x 20cm slab

400g good-quality dark chocolate
100g good-quality milk chocolate
¼ cup smooth peanut butter
2 teaspoons sea salt flakes

Line a large baking tray with baking paper. Place dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan half-filled with simmering water (make sure bowl doesn't touch water). Stir with a metal spoon until chocolate melts and is smooth. Remove bowl from pan.

Repeat with milk chocolate in a separate bowl. Add peanut butter and mix until well combined.

Pour dark chocolate onto prepared tray. Drizzle milk chocolate mixture over dark chocolate, then use a skewer to create a marbled effect.

Place in refrigerator for 30 minutes or until firm. Sprinkle with sea salt to taste. Break or cut into large pieces.

THE EASTER BUNNY

Materials

our template /pattern (see page 124)
pins and scissors
30cm of wool felt fabric (for body and ears)
complementary cotton print fabrics
embroidery thread (for ears and face)
needle and sewing thread
two 12cm x 1cm strips of cardboard
polyester fibre filling
piece of ribbon (for decoration)

Enlarge the pattern pieces for the bunny's body, arm, leg, ear and tail (see page 124) by 200 per cent (or desired size) on a photocopier. Cut them out.

Pin body and ear pattern pieces to felt. Cut out 2 pieces for body and 2 pieces for ears. Pin arm, leg, ear and tail pattern pieces to cotton fabric. Cut out 4 pieces for arms, 4 pieces for legs, 2 pieces for insides of ears and 1 piece for tail.

Cut cotton fabric pieces for insides of ears 1cm smaller (all around) than ear template. Pin them, right-side up, on felt ears and hand-stitch in place with embroidery thread, leaving base open. Insert cardboard strips into ears and trim any excess cardboard.

Work running-stitch 5mm in from edge of tail piece, leaving thread ends long. Place filling in centre, then pull thread ends to gather fabric into a tail. Tie thread ends together to secure.

Pin pairs of fabric arm pieces together, right sides together, and hand- or machine-stitch a narrow seam (about 5mm) around edges, leaving ends open. Repeat with the legs. Turn arms and legs right-sides out and stuff with filling (use a bamboo skewer to help).

Lay arms across right side of one body piece with edges aligned and stitch in place. Lay ears right-side down over face of bunny with edges aligned and stitch in place. Place right sides of body pieces together (arms and ears will be inside). Stitch a 5mm seam around body, leaving base open.

Turn bunny right-side out and stuff with filling. Fold base of body in while pinning legs in place, then hand-stitch closed. Stitch tail in place. Use embroidery thread to sew eyes and nose. Tie ribbon in a bow around neck. >

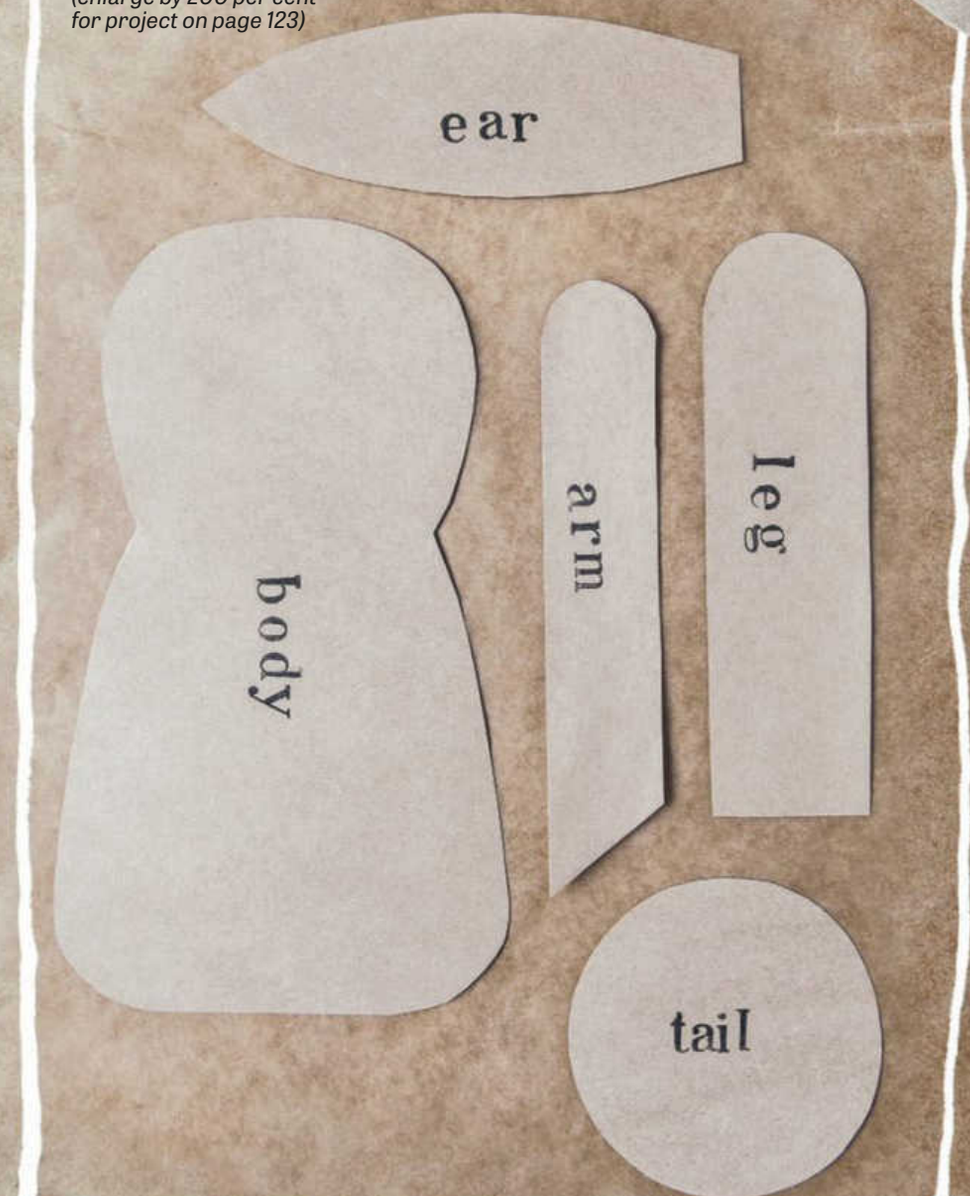


The Easter Bunny
FACING PAGE Salted chocolate & peanut bark



PATTERN FOR THE EASTER BUNNY

(enlarge by 200 per cent for project on page 123)



EASTER BUNNY MASK

Materials

brown paper, lightweight kraft paper or cardboard
scissors and a pencil
masking tape or hot glue gun
hole punch
millinery elastic
dried leaves
paintbrushes and watercolour paints

Cut brown paper or cardboard into a 9cm x 6cm piece or to fit child's face. Round edges of mask with scissors to shape (use picture above as a guide). Use a pencil to mark holes for eyes, then cut out with scissors.

To reinforce elastic holes, stick small pieces of masking tape on back of the mask near the sides. Use a hole punch or scissors to make a hole on each side of mask. Thread a piece of elastic through holes and secure with knots. Use scissors to trim the stems from leaves. Attach leaves as ears to back of mask using masking tape or a hot glue gun.

Paint a rabbit nose and whiskers on mask with watercolour paints. Allow to dry before wearing mask.

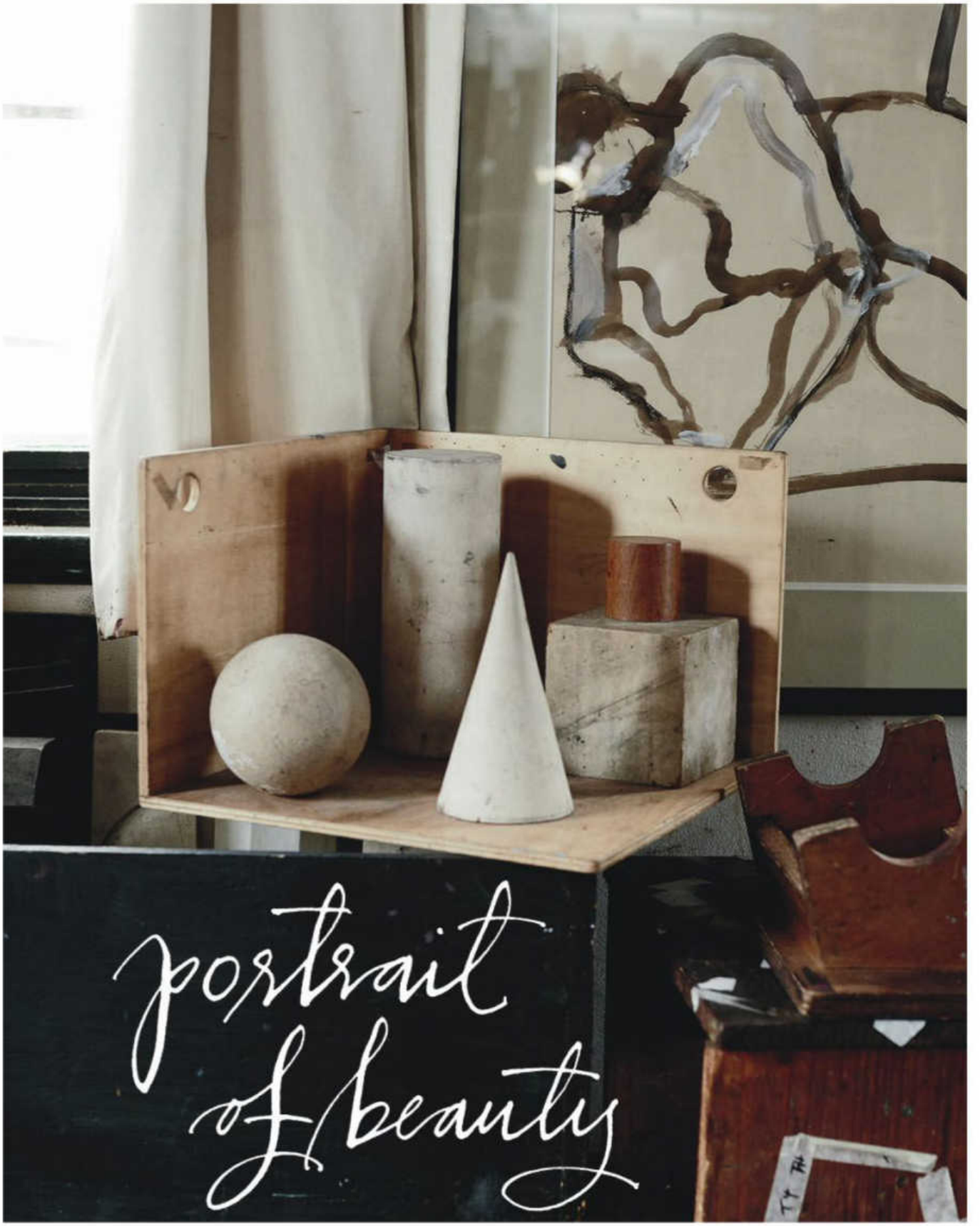
CLOCKWISE, FROM RIGHT Local providore A Slice of Orange shows its wares; local landscape; the table setting at a past Producers' Lunch; guests are welcomed to Nashdale Hall; you can't get fresher than this; sheep are one of the mainstays of this thriving farming district; apples at the farmers' market; there's no place like home for the locals; a two-course meal presents the best regional produce.

Orange FOOD Week lunch

AUTUMN IS THE perfect time of year to visit the lovely town of Orange — and next month, the NSW central west will again celebrate its bountiful food and wine culture with a 10-day program that includes tastings, farm tours, picnics, night markets, music and more. As part of Orange FOOD Week, which starts on April 8, *Country Style* will again host the much-loved Producers' Lunch at the Country Women's Association Hall in Nashdale. On April 14, join *Country Style's* editor-in-chief Victoria Carey and Orange Farmers' Market manager Cath Thompson to meet the producers of Orange and browse the farmers' market stalls in the grounds, before moving into the hall to enjoy a long-table lunch featuring local food and wine.

WHERE Nashdale Hall, Cargo Road, Nashdale, near Orange. **WHEN** Thursday April 14, 2016, 11.30am–3pm. **PRICE** $70 for canapés and a local drop on arrival, two courses and local wines. **BOOKINGS** Cath Thompson, 0425 259 350.

PHOTOGRAPHY JEREMY SIMONS, MICHAEL WEE



portrait of beauty

TO CELEBRATE OUR ANNUAL ART ISSUE, OUR FASHION TEAM WENT TO THE JULIAN ASHTON ART SCHOOL IN SYDNEY, A SCHOOL THAT HAS INFLUENCED GENERATIONS OF AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS.

PHOTOGRAPHY **PRUE RUSCOE** STYLING **LARA HUTTON**



IN THE FRAME

KEEP IT CLASSY AND TIMELESS.

Thursday Sunday robe **coat**, $594. Kate Sylvester 'Aimee' **blouse**, $359. Arnley 'McCarthy' **skirt**, $360. Boden 'Cecily' **shoes**, $178. **For stockist details, see page 143.**





STILL LIFE

A DARK PALETTE WITH SUBTLE CONTRAST.

ABOVE LEFT Jac + Jack 'Ash' **coat**, $899. Vanishing Elephant 'Kurta' **dress**, $220. Boden 'Lillie' **shoes**, $218. **FACING PAGE** Marimekko 'Gerda' **top**, $275. Nicola Finetti culotte **pants**, $390. Boden 'Cecily' **shoes**, $178. **For stockist details, see page 143.**


PLEASE KEEP
PORTFOLIOS
HERE





COSTUME DRAMA

FORM AND BEAUTY APPLY TO BOTH ART AND ATTIRE.

Gant **coat**, $999. COS asymmetric **dress**, $190. Boden 'Ashley' **shoes**, $198. **FACING PAGE** COS 'Crown' A-line **coat**, $225. Fella Hamilton 'Andrea' boucle **cardigan**, $159. Everyday Cashmere long-sleeved cowl-neck **top**, $225. Givoni check **pants**, $79.95. Stuart Weitzman 'Schooldays' **shoes**, $715, available at Hermanns. **For stockist details, see page 143.**

Photographed at the Julian Ashton Art School, The Rocks, NSW; julianashtonartschool.com.au

Hair and make-up by **Annette McKenzie.**



seeing red

AS THE LEAVES GRADUALLY TURN AN AUTUMNAL RED, SO DO LIP SHADES. JULIETTE WINTER PICKS THE PERFECT PRODUCTS FOR THE COOLER SEASON.

OF ALL THE trends that come and go, red lips and groomed brows have stood the test of time as an iconic beauty duo. From ancient Egyptian beauties — Cleopatra supposedly painted her lips with crushed carmine beetles — to the signature scarlet pouts and defined arches of actress Elizabeth Taylor and burlesque queen Dita Von Teese, it's a look that signals timeless glamour.

"Like your favourite little black dress, a bright lipstick gives you an instant confidence boost," explains British make-up artist Charlotte Tilbury. "The right hue has the transformative power to immediately lift your mood. One swish of colour and you're ready to go."

The most sought-after shade for autumn is a bold ruby red in a matte finish — but every variant of red, from light rose to deep berry, will be popular this season. "I think anyone can look amazing in these lip shades," says Estée Lauder make-up artist Kammy Lee. "The berry tones look stunning on a warm or tanned complexion, while the spiced hues can warm up cool or fair skin beautifully."

Despite their unwavering popularity, bold colours are also the most likely to intimidate at the beauty counter. Yes, it requires some confidence to carry off, but if a ruby red isn't for you, there are clever ways of adding just a hint of crimson to your colour palette. "A slick of berry-toned or spice-toned gloss over your usual neutral lip colour will subtly update your look," Kammy advises.

You'll instinctively know when it's the right shade, too. "It will instantly bring your features alive, illuminate your complexion, hair and eyes, and make you look five years younger," Charlotte says. "Bright pigments are instant youth-boosting beauty miracles!"

Make-up artists agree that bold lips are most glamorous with minimal make-up. A slick of mascara and a beautifully defined brow and you've got polished make-up perfection.

"Shaping your brows is a quick way to take years off your complexion," says Benefit national brow artist Hannah Terrett. "It emphasises the key lift points of the eye area, creating a soft and youthful finish."

A professional brow tint can add the illusion of fullness for a few weeks, but there are oodles of at-home brow volumisers that you can reach for daily.

"Brow products are the pixie dust to bringing your brows to life, but you need to know how to use them properly," Hannah says. She advises using an angled brush to buff the brow product into the roots of the brow hairs. "Use a back and forth teasing technique, as if you were back-combing your hair. That way, your brows will appear voluminous from the base and less top-heavy with product."

There's no real secret to applying lipstick — brushes create a neater edge if you are searching for precision, but straight from the tube will give lips a good hit of colour. However, there are some clever tricks to help the colour stay put. Kammy suggests lining the entire lip with a lipliner in a tone that is similar to your natural lip colour. Why? "It defines the lip shape, adds staying power and prevents your lipstick from bleeding," she says.

As with everything else in life, confidence in perfecting your pout comes with practice and the willingness to experiment. "For a subtle change, try a new lip gloss... or go for a bold matte lipstick if you really want to make an impact," Kammy says. "But either way, don't be scared to play with colour!" CS

PHOTOGRAPHY **CORRIE BOND** STYLING **LARA HUTTON**

a fresh start

Update your autumn look with a burst of berry lipstick and a beautifully defined brow.



A SIMPLE THREE-STEP *brow solution,* ***Clinique Pretty Easy Brow Palette ($66)*** *is a portable palette that shows you exactly where to apply the brow powder, highlighter and fixative brow gel. It makes brow grooming easy for everyone.*

ENJOY A LUMINOUS *glow with* ***Charlotte Tilbury Matte Revolution Long-Lasting Lipstick in Love Liberty ($48)****. This rich, earthy red shade has nourishing orchid extract and special 3D glowing pigments. They catch the light so your lips look fuller.*



NO HARD LINES! *The* ***Estée Lauder Brow Now Brow Defining Pencil in Light Brunette ($38)*** *does away with the hard lines a brow pencil can create. It has a gel texture to add volume, while shaping with a 12-hour formula that's resistant to humidity, water (rain!) and sweat.*



CREATED WITH BEESWAX, *vitamin E and raspberry seed oil, the* ***Burt's Bees 100% Natural Lipsticks ($19.95)*** *feel light and luscious on your lips. They come in 14 beautiful shades such as this Brimming Berry.*





BLENDING THE BENEFITS *of a gloss, lipstick and balm,* ***Estée Lauder Pure Color Envy Liquid Lip Potion in Fragile Ego ($50)*** *glides over lips and feels delightfully creamy, while leaving a bold pop of colour with just the right amount of shine in a satin finish.*



FOR A FAST *swipe of lip colour, the* ***Glo-Minerals Suede Matte Crayon ($30)*** *is one to keep in your handbag. With a creamy, long-wearing colour and a handy sharpener attached to the lid, here it is in Trademark, an easy-to-wear, spicy brown shade.*

TO BOOST BROWS, *try this* ***Benefit Gimme Brow in Light/Medium ($37)****. It's a tinted gel with little fibre flecks that add instant volume, filling in patches while creating a more defined but completely natural-looking brow.*





AN ALL-IN-ONE KIT *is what you get with* ***Clarins Kit Sourcils Pro Perfect Eyes & Brows Palette ($44)****. It has three tools including a brush, double-ended applicator and mini tweezers for perfect grooming — plus there are black, brown and blonde shades to fill in and define, fixing wax to hold brows and nude eyeshadow to illuminate the eye area.*



KEEP LIPS SUPPLE *and luscious with* ***Elizabeth Arden Ceramide Ultra Lipstick in Violetini ($48)****. Based on their renowned Ceramide skincare collection, it's infused with nourishing moisturisers, antioxidants and vitamins.*

For stockist details, see page 143.



BOOK CLUB

WITH THE EASTER HOLIDAY ON THE HORIZON, PLAN SOME QUIET TIME FOR INTENSIVE READING.

REVIEWS **ANNABEL LAWSON**

HOLD

Kirsten Tranter, 4th Estate, $27.99

I recently read in *The New York Times* that finding an extra room in one's house is a common and widespread recurring dream. Shelley buys a terrace house in Sydney with the successor to her drowned lover and, lo and behold, finds a hidden room that is narrow but has a chandelier and a fireplace. It becomes a space of transformation. She experiments with the lover, his troubled and disagreeable daughter and the cheeky lad who sells her an antique sofa. There are consequences.

JONATHAN UNLEASHED

Meg Rosoff, Bloomsbury, $27.99

Even if you don't love dogs, you will gobble this bittersweet tale of a New York copywriter ('3 pens for 2' is one of his triumphs) whose brother has foisted on him a border collie, Dante, and a spaniel bitch, Sissy. Advertising agencies and the magazine industry get a pasting, hilariously. Julie the almost-perfect yet extremely irritating girlfriend goes too far when she lets sponsors in on their wedding. The dogs — wise Dante and Sissy, a canine Jezebel — steal the show. Of course.

THE BUTTERFLY ENIGMA

Lorraine Campbell, McIntosh Publishing, $29.99

Melbourne in the 1960s and Lena, a new migrant, puts the war behind her — her years with the Resistance, her chequered romances. She masters a shorthand speed of 300 words per minute, which qualifies her to record court proceedings. She earns four times what a good secretary gets. She can coolly plan to marry an upcoming young lawyer while sleeping with his boss, a married judge. However, the focus of the plot is Nazi war criminals who found a soft landing in Australia. Excellent research and drama.

CARRYING ALBERT HOME

Homer Hickam, Harper Collins, $29.99

The author has a sheaf of photographs to almost prove the veracity of these amazing tales, but he admits that his parents exaggerated. Before the birth of their son and in the midst of the Great Depression, they insert an alligator named Albert into a tin bath in the back of a Buick. An uninvited rooster hops on board. They journey from the coalfields down to Orlando, where Albert must cease to be Elsie Hickam's adored pet and live in the ocean like his peers. They meet Hemingway, double for the stars in a Tarzan film and swim free (Albert alongside) from capture by smugglers. And Homer's father has a role in blowing up a mill. That's about half of what happens. Unique.

REBOUND

Aga Lesiewicz, Macmillan, $29.99

A brilliant whodunnit set in London, where Anna Wright has a top job with a global television network. (Corporate horrors very well done.) Lesiewicz exemplifies the golden rule of 'show, don't tell'. There's no description of Anna but nine men fall for her in one way or another. We get it — she's hot. Some lovely work in the side plots, duplicitous chancers, unspoilt police officers, intercontinental romance, the enduring oddness of Hampstead Heath in an ever more standardised world.

FALL

Candice Fox, Random House, $32.99

I have been so slow to 'discover' this author. Her other two crime novels, *Hades* and *Eden*, have already scooped the field in prizes. *Fall* begins quietly then expands into horror glimmering with comedy. A police investigator has to live with the fact that Eden, the colleague he's fond of, is a serial killer. Fox clearly admires the harsh woman she has created and offers excuses. Back story. Trauma. Failure of the justice system to do more than complicate simple matters and betray police daring and skill. Fabulously well written.

LIGHTS OUT

Ted Koppel, Penguin Random House, $52.99

I saw Koppel, a long-time former US TV news anchor, in an hour-long interview. He quoted the current secretary of the Department of Homeland Security in the US who "is sure that a plan to deal with the aftermath of a cyber attack on one of America's three power grids exists" — but he hasn't seen it and does not know any details. Taking down a grid is easily done, apparently. Koppel is no fly-by-night — he was chosen to accompany Nixon to China. Unlike the blokes in charge (women are thin on the ground in this area), Koppel has solutions. Help from unaffected states? You wish. His best advice to his fellow Americans is to emulate the Latter Day Saints and stock up for three months. And we in Australia are not immune.

PHOTOGRAPHY **GUY BAILEY**



ART SCENE

Sculpture makes a wonderful addition to — and statement in — the garden. Artist Inge King's bold *Rings of Saturn*, made of stainless steel, is highlighted at the Heide Museum of Modern Art in Victoria. It's also one of a number of rural collections showcased in *Private: A Guide to Personal Art Collections in Australia and New Zealand* (Dott Publishing, $24.95).





WINTER ROSE

Two new David Austin English Rose varieties — 'Tranquility' and 'Wollerton Old Hall' (above) — will make their debut at the Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show at the Royal Exhibition Buildings and Carlton Gardens. March 16th–20th; melbflowershow.com.au

in the garden

THE BEST PLANTINGS, PRODUCTS AND ADVICE TO MAKE YOUR PATCH PROSPER.

LEARN & GROW

Designed for gardeners of all levels, Milkwood's practical short courses — held in Sydney, Melbourne and at Gerringong and Otford in NSW's Illawarra region — cover topics such as orchading, permaculture design and biointensive growing. "Our motto is, 'Start where you are, use what you have, do what you can'," says director Kirsten Bradley. (02) 5300 4473; milkwood.net



WOOD STOCK

Dutch brand De Wit's Wooden Dibber, $52, makes precise, small-scale planting a breeze. 1300 855 162; homecamp.com.au





IN THE FAMILY Made with dried herbs and Epsom salts, Billy Creek Tea Tonic natural fertiliser, $8.95, is based on a recipe passed down through generations; billycreek.bigcartel.com



DIGGING IT

Planting bulbs this year? The Burgon & Ball Bulb Planter, $36, from Homecamp gets the thumbs-up from Britain's Royal Horticultural Society. 1300 855 162; homecamp.com.au

OPEN GARDENS

12TH–13TH NSW GOULBURN ROSE FESTIVAL Thousands of roses feature in this annual celebration, held each year at the Goulburn Soldiers Club. There is a rose competition open to everyone. Entry $5, children under 16 free. goulburnrosefestival.org.au

12TH–13TH QUEENSLAND IPSWICH PLANT EXPO This is the fourth year of the specialised tropical and subtropical plant fair. With more than 100 stalls, and guest speakers. 0437 110 789; plantexpo.com.au

12TH–14TH VICTORIA BALLARAT BEGONIA FESTIVAL The centrepiece of this annual festival are the tuberous begonias that have grown in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens since 1896. (03) 5320 5500; ballaratbegoniafestival.com

16TH–20TH VICTORIA MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW See this famed exhibition in a whole new way during the special twilight viewing on the Friday evening. Entry $27 adults, $10 children, family $60. melbflowershow.com.au

26TH VICTORIA MORNINGTON PENINSULA ANNUAL EASTER BONSAI SHOW Enjoy a wonderful display of bonsai, with expert advice and plenty of stock for sale. Entry $5, children free. 0437 059 324.

WORDS **CATHERINE McCORMACK** MAIN PHOTOGRAPH **JOHN GOLLING** STILL-LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY **GUY BAILEY** MERCHANDISING **DANIELLE SELIG**

planting guide

The onset of autumn opens up a range of opportunities for your garden.

name	height	sun or shade	planting zone
ANEMONE, POPPY ANEMONE (*Anemone coronaria*) Plant these curious, chocolate drop-shaped corms now for low-care flowers in late winter and spring. Perhaps try a colour mix of mauve, white and red flowers, or choose a single colour selection such as 'Blue Poppy'.	30–40cm Grow as an annual to inject bold colour into spring gardens.	Flowers can be picked to use for a spring bouquet.	C M T S
COLUMBINE (*Aquilegia vulgaris*) Also known by the cute name of 'Granny's Bonnet', seeds of this spring-flowering plant are sown during autumn. Lots of flower colours are available, including pink, mauve, white, red and yellow. Start a collection!	30–90cm Biennial. It forms a delicate, fern-like clump with tall spires of flowers.	Deadhead after flowering but leave a few seed heads to mature and self-sow.	C M T
HAIRPIN BANKSIA (*Banksia spinulosa*) Many banksias flower during autumn and winter to bring birds and insects to the garden. The compact hairpin banksia has small, cylindrical yellow flowers, with gold or red styles bent like hairpins.	90cm This dense evergreen shrub can be pruned and shaped.	This is an understorey plant in the bush, so it fits in beneath garden trees.	C M T S Tr
BRUKALE (*Brassica oleracea* 'Petit Posy', Gemmifera group) Now you can grow brussels sprouts and kale together in one plant called brukale or flower sprouts. This vegie has pretty purple and green sprout-like flower buds.	60cm Pick sprouts from the bottom of the stem up as they mature (16–20 weeks from sowing).	Sow seeds now in seed trays, then transplant into the garden when 7cm high.	C M T S
PANSY (*Viola x wittrockiana*) These cheerful annuals can be massed in beds or popped into containers as colourful garden accents. Plant seedlings now. Water, liquid feed and deadhead plants regularly to keep them in bloom for months.	20–30cm Great in pots or hanging baskets, or tucked among flowering bulbs.	They are long-lasting in cool zones but wind down when it heats up.	C M T S
SNOW PEAS (*Pisium sativum var. saccharatum*) Snow peas are fast-growing and trouble-free vegies. Plant seeds or seedlings directly into damp vegie beds or large containers. Harvest them in eight weeks, once the pods appear but before they mature.	1.5–2m+ Erect a climbing frame or teepee for support as peas grow.	Frost during flowering may delay pod formation during winter.	C M T S Tr
SWEET PEA (*Lathyrus odoratus*) There are many varieties of this fragrant annual climber, including bicolours and selections with old-fashioned frilly petals. Plant seeds or seedlings now in moist, well-drained soil against a climbing frame. Space 50cm apart.	30cm–2.4m Choose dwarf clumping forms for containers or to edge a path.	Once flowering, pick flowers regularly to keep blooms coming.	C M T S Tr
WINDFLOWER (*Anemone x hybrida*) These white or pink autumn-flowering perennials are blooming. Look for potted plants in flower at garden centres. Named varieties are available. A few plants naturalise to form a massed planting that delights each autumn.	80cm–1.5m Tall flower stems light up autumn gardens.	Leave a few flower stems to develop seeds and spread windflowers in the garden.	C M T

KEY Sun · Semi shade · Shade

C = Cool climate M = Mediterranean T = Temperate S = Subtropical Tr = Tropical

WORDS **JENNIFER STACKHOUSE** BACKGROUND PHOTOGRAPHY **SAM McADAM-COOPER** STYLING **PHOEBE McEVOY**



The White House restaurant has plenty of European charm.

HAHNDORF

SAVOUR A LITTLE TASTE OF GERMAN VILLAGE LIFE IN THE ADELAIDE HILLS.

THOUSANDS OF VISITORS come to Hahndorf each year to see and enjoy Australia's oldest surviving German settlement, established back in 1838. The main street is lined with spreading elms and plane trees, and original Fachwerk — or half-timbered German buildings now housing boutique stores, old pubs, lively wine bars and eateries.

Hahndorf, with a population of nearly 2000, still has a village atmosphere and is in one of the most beautifully rural parts of the Adelaide Hills, yet is only a short drive from the CBD. This also makes it an attractive place to live, whether on a town block or a small acreage.

The renowned Australian landscape painter Sir Hans Heysen lived and painted in and around Hahndorf from 1912 until his death in 1968, and his home and studio, The Cedars, is well preserved and open to the public.

The Adelaide Hills is renowned for cool-climate wines, boutique produce and charming villages, and is best discovered on the many scenic touring routes.
For more information, go to hahndorfsa.org.au

TRAVEL TO AND FROM

Hahndorf is 26 kilometres south-east of Adelaide and, thanks to the South Eastern Freeway (M1), is a comfortable 25-minute drive from the city and about 40 minutes from the airport. The Adelaide Metro bus has very frequent services between the city and Hahndorf; adelaidemetro.com.au

PROPERTY

Hahndorf real estate prices are buoyant, with properties in greater demand than anywhere else in South Australia.

"We've seen some nice price rises — over seven years you could look at doubling the price," says Kimberley Shorland, director of real estate agents Harcourts Adelaide Hills. "We see people moving from the metropolitan area to Hahndorf because of the beautiful main street with all the trees, the little wine bars, restaurants and cafes. You have an easy country lifestyle yet it's reasonably close to the city."

The median price for a three-bedroom home is around $480,000. There is a wide range of housing types — from heritage homes to blocks with 1970s-style houses that can be cleared for building, to new homes on town blocks and small acreages and farms close to town.

"The main reason for the price surge in Hahndorf is that it still has the original town boundaries and the state government is definite about it not expanding," Kimberley says. "So there's the beauty of having rural land around town... and on a Friday night you can walk down the street and have a glass of wine and a platter. It's a great lifestyle."

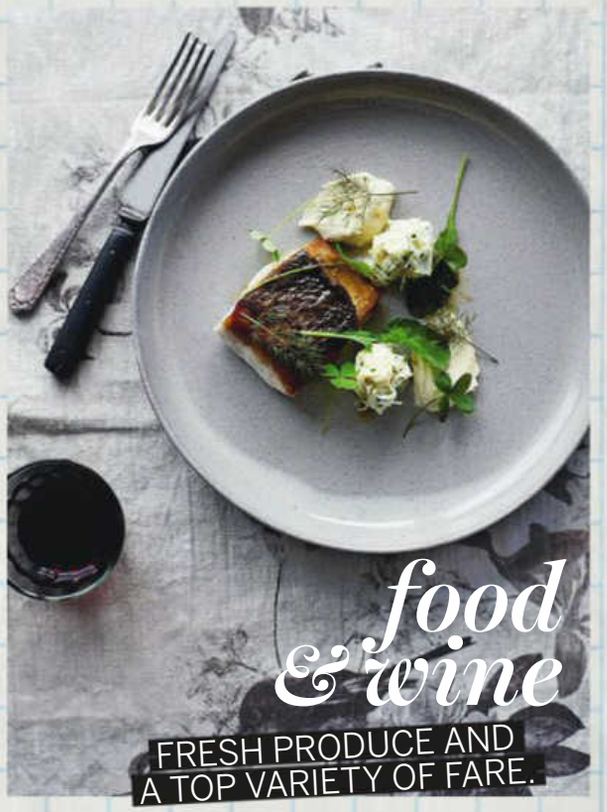


1 The Lane Vineyard
2 The White House
3 German Arms Hotel
4 The Hahndorf Academy
5 Beerenberg Farm



CLOCKWISE The impressive entrance to The Lane Vineyard restaurant; roast snapper is on the menu at The Lane Vineyard; Hans Heysen's studio at The Cedars; Woodside Cheese Wrights.





food & wine

FRESH PRODUCE AND A TOP VARIETY OF FARE.

- **THE LANE VINEYARD** Fine wines, cellar door sales and tastings, elegant dining and Friday twilight drinks. 5 Ravenswood Lane. (08) 8388 1250; thelane.com.au
- **THE WHITE HOUSE** Food inspired by the farmhouse bistros of France, with Adelaide Hills wines, live music and an outdoor cinema in summer. 90 Main Street. (08) 8388 7669; thewhitehouseadelaidehills.com.au
- **GERMAN ARMS HOTEL** Traditional German and Australian pub-style cuisine is served. 69 Main Street. (08) 8388 7013; germanarmshotel.com.au
- **OTTO'S BAKERY** A lip-licking array of pies, slices, cakes and pastries. 9 Main Street. (08) 8388 7579.
- **SOMERLED WINES** This family business specialises in a small range of cool-climate wines. 89 Main Street. (08) 8388 7478; somerled.com.au
- **WOODSIDE CHEESE WRIGHTS** A short drive takes you to this treat for lovers of award-winning artisanal cheese. 22 Henry Street, Woodside; woodsidecheese.com.au

WORDS **VIRGINIA IMHOFF** PHOTOGRAPHY **SHARYN CAIRNS, MARK ROPER** STYLING **INDIANNA FOORD** ILLUSTRATION **CLARE OWEN**

WHERE THE LOCALS GO *INSIGHTS FROM HAHNDORF INSIDERS*

CROWD FAVOURITES

The Cedars The family home of artist Sir Hans Heysen contains an excellent selection of his paintings. Heysen Road. (08) 8388 7277; hansheysen.com.au

The Hahndorf Academy Exhibiting Hahndorf's Germanic background and local artists. 68 Main Street. (08) 8388 7250; hahndorfacademy.org.au

Kirby Park Megan Jones Riding School has lessons, trail rides, holiday programs and a weekend saddle club. 171 River Road. 0435 831 304; kirbypark.com

Oakbank Racing Club Famous as the home of the Great Eastern Steeple Chase, held during the Easter Racing Carnival. Oakwood Road, Oakbank. (08) 8388 4072; oakbankracingclub.com.au

SHOPPING

Poet's Ode A general store where you can find ethically made goods from all over the world. 100B Main Street. 0400 420 418; poets-ode.com.au

The German Pantry Everything from sauerkraut, chocolate and cured meats to glass beer steins. 45 Mount Barker Road. (08) 8388 7454; thegermanpantry.com.au

Beerenberg Farm This famous family owned farm is also a manufacturer of jams, marmalade and condiments, with pick-your-own strawberry sales. Mount Barker Road. (08) 8388 7272; beerenberg.com.au

Udder Delights An artisan cheese manufacturer, with cheese tasting and cellar sales, high tea and cheese-making classes. 91A Main Street. (08) 8388 1588; udderdelights.com.au

Harris Smokehouse This smokehouse, in its fourth generation of family ownership, sells smoked salmon, trout, kippers, ocean trout, oysters and other seafood. 37 Main Street. (08) 8388 7000; harrissmokehouse.com.au

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PHOTOGRAPHY GUY BAILEY STYLING DANIELLE SELIG
STYLING ASSISTANT NATALIE JOHNSON



Ceramic **planter**, $85, from The Country Trader. Artesania de Galicia **pitcher**, $95, from Spence & Lyda. Tête à Tête 'Incendere' **candle**, $70. 'Stash' **desk**, $699, from Blue Dot. **Ribbon**, stylist's own. **For stockist details, see page 143.**

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TALENT SHOW

Learn how to paint gorgeous flowers in no time with Australian artist Jacqueline Coates's online classes and her step-by-step Blooms Painting Method. You won't believe how easy it is. howtopaintblooms.com



A FINE YARN

Find everything you need to stay warm this autumn and winter at The Uralla Wool Room. Stock up on quality woollen garments and accessories by leading brands such as Smitten Merino, Walnut Hill, Toorallie, Merino Snug and Uimi, as well as colourful yarns, and knitting and crochet patterns. uralla woolroom.com.au



VINTAGE APPEAL

Practical and stylish, the 'Obernai 1' section library from Provincial Home Living is a classic piece that has been handcrafted from solid timber and given an aged finish to ensure a beautiful vintage look. provincialhome living.com.au



STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

Get your new season wardrobe sorted with Givoni. This iconic Australian label is known for quality clothing in contemporary and enduring designs. From the latest looks to everyday essentials, such as cardigans and work shirts, you'll find statement pieces along with classic attire. Check out the 'Daywear' collection for inspiration. givoni.com.au

SOFT TOUCH

This versatile V-neck poncho from Everyday Cashmere will complement just about any outfit. It's made from pure cashmere, so it's super soft. Pictured here in grey marle, this poncho is a great investment piece that will keep you warm in the cooler months. everyday cashmere.com





MAKE A STATEMENT

Simple and elegant, this 9ct rose-gold, brilliant-cut diamond solitaire ring from Catanach's Jewellers looks great when worn on its own, or as part of a stack. It's also available in white or yellow gold. catanachs.com.au



The Art Issue
How to bring your outdoor art studio to life with fabrics and colour.
Full stockist details, from page 37.
BACKGROUND FABRICS IN STUDIO, FROM LEFT Carleton V 'Puff' **fabric** in Lapis Berry, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. Canvas painted in Berger Dimple low sheen interior **paint**, $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. Sequana 'Petals' **fabric** in Autumn, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. Cane **chair**, $75, from Waverley Antique Bazaar. Velvet **cushion** in Pink (on chair), $215, and Bensimon **sneakers**, $90, both from Manon Bis. **ON GROUND, FROM LEFT** Mi-Teintes **card** in Orange, $5.65 a sheet, from Eckersley's. **CRATE** Timber **crate**, $145, from The Junk Company. **IN CRATE, FROM LEFT** Liberty 'Tana Lawn' **fabric** (assorted prints), $50 a metre, from Collections on Central Park. Mi-Teintes **card** in Blush, $8.75 a sheet, and Rust, $5.65 a sheet, both from Eckersley's. Tyler Hall **wallpaper** in Orange, POA, and Blithfield 'Oakleaves' **wallpaper** in Pink, POA, both from Tigger Hall Design. Genevieve Levy **cushion**, $145, from Manon Bis. *Vessels* **artwork**, POA, from Anita Mertzlin. Canvas painted in Berger Saint low sheen interior **paint**, $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. **TABLE** Timber **table**, $78, from The Junk Company. Table painted in Berger French Brocade low sheen interior **paint**, $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. **ON TABLE, FROM LEFT Jar** and **palette**, stylist's own. Porter's Paints Red Lantern acrylic **paint** (in jar), $5.20 for 100ml. Bridget Bodenham spotted **vase**, $110. Shannon Garson **jug**, $176, from Potier. Bridget Bodenham ice-cream **bowl**, $35. **Cream jug** and **brushes**, stylist's own. Hobbs & Co 'Iron Butterfly' **fabric**, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. **Flowers** from Say It With Flowers. **Easel**, $65, and **books** (at foot of easel), $12 each, all from The Junk Company. *Threads and Seams of the White Desert* **artwork** by Jo Bertini (on easel), $6000, from MARS Gallery. **Apron**, stylist's own. 'Onyx' wool/silk **rug**, POA, from Hali Handmade Rugs. **STOOL Stool**, $45, from Waverley Antique Bazaar. Stool painted in Berger Ice Fountain low sheen interior **paint**, $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. **ON STOOL, FROM LEFT** Bridget Bodenham 'Pebble' **vase**, $66. **Jar, brush** and **dish**, stylist's own. Berger Saint low sheen interior **paint** (in jar), $36.95 for one litre, from Inspirations Paint. Genevieve Levy **cushion** in Orange, $265, from Manon Bis. 'Red Wattle Bird' **cushion** in white, $295, from Anita Mertzlin. Galbraith & Paul 'Small Star' **cushion** in Orange, POA, from Tigger Hall Design. Velvet **cushion** in Rouge, $215, from Manon Bis. Shannon Garson **mug** (on garden bed), $61.60, from Potier. **For stockist details, see below.**

stockists WHERE TO BUY PRODUCTS FROM THIS ISSUE.

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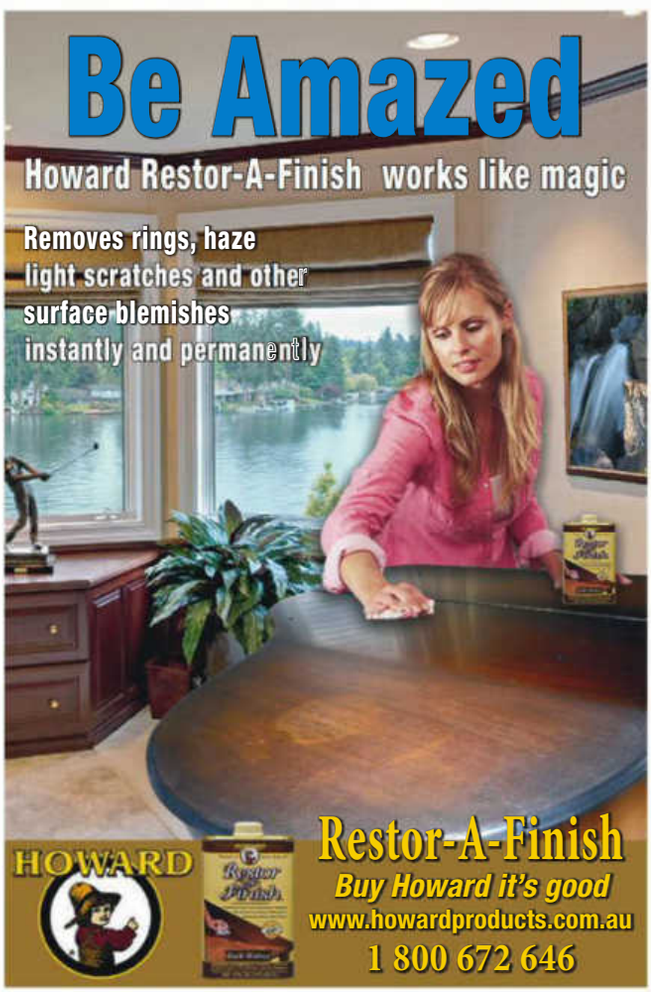
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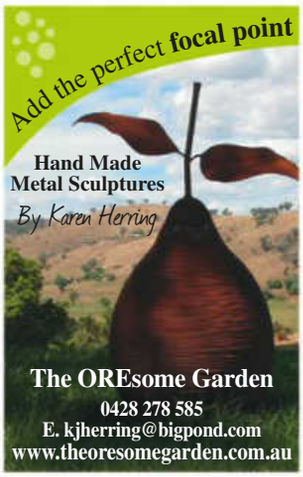

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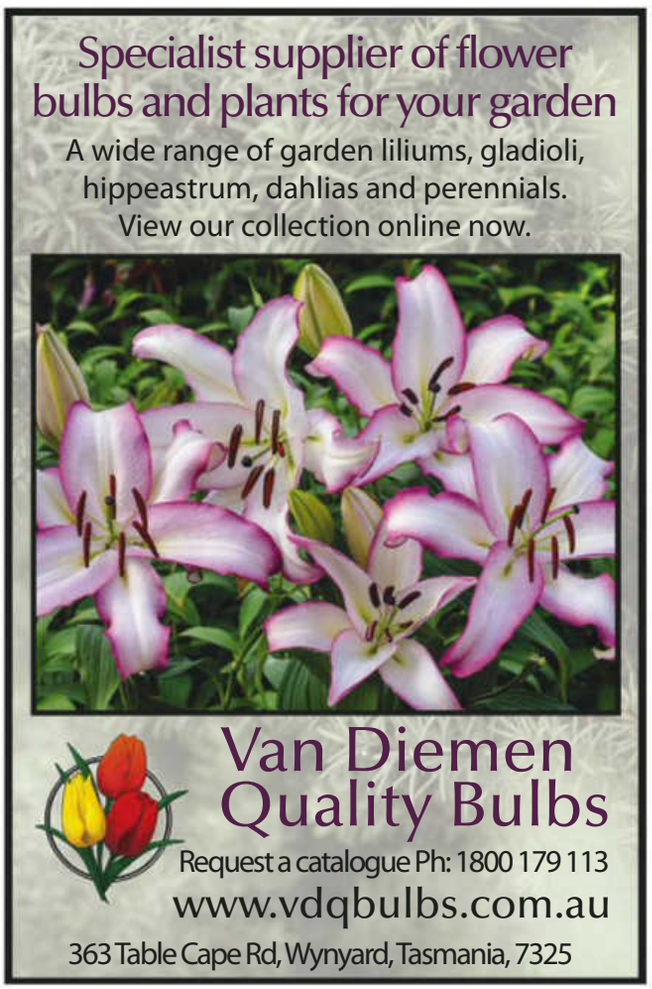

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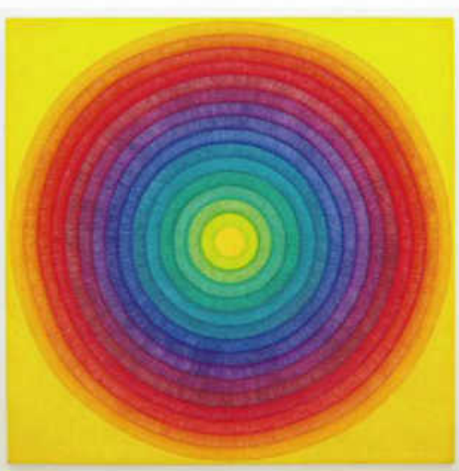
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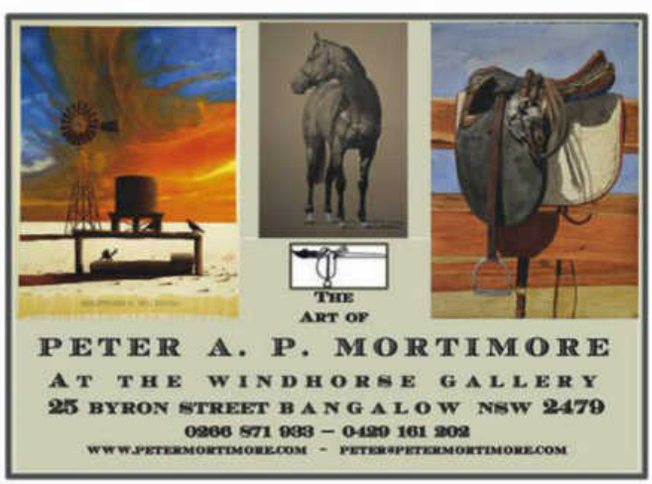
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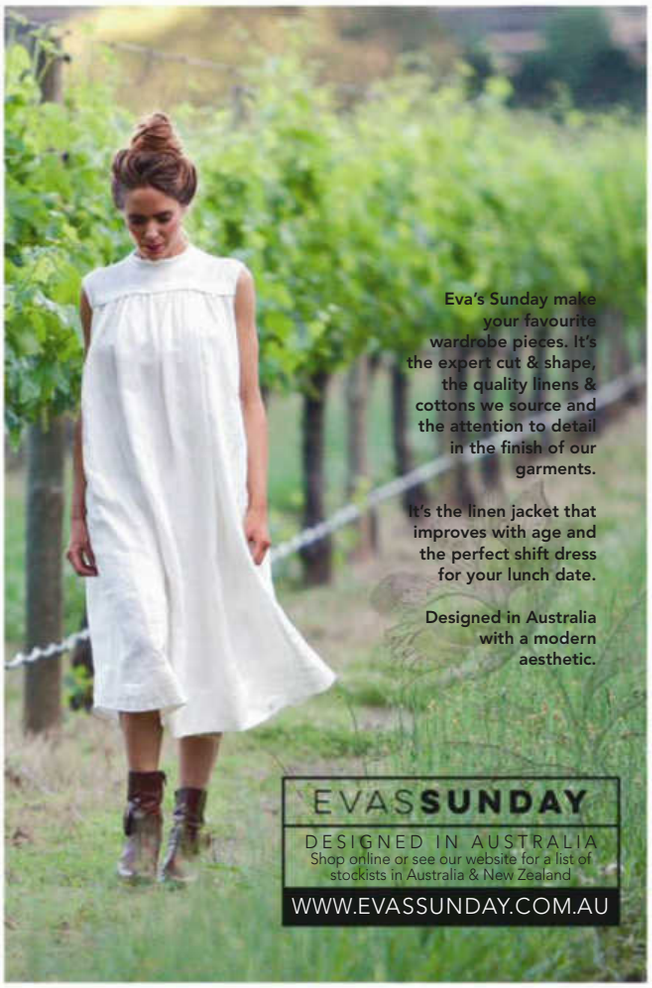


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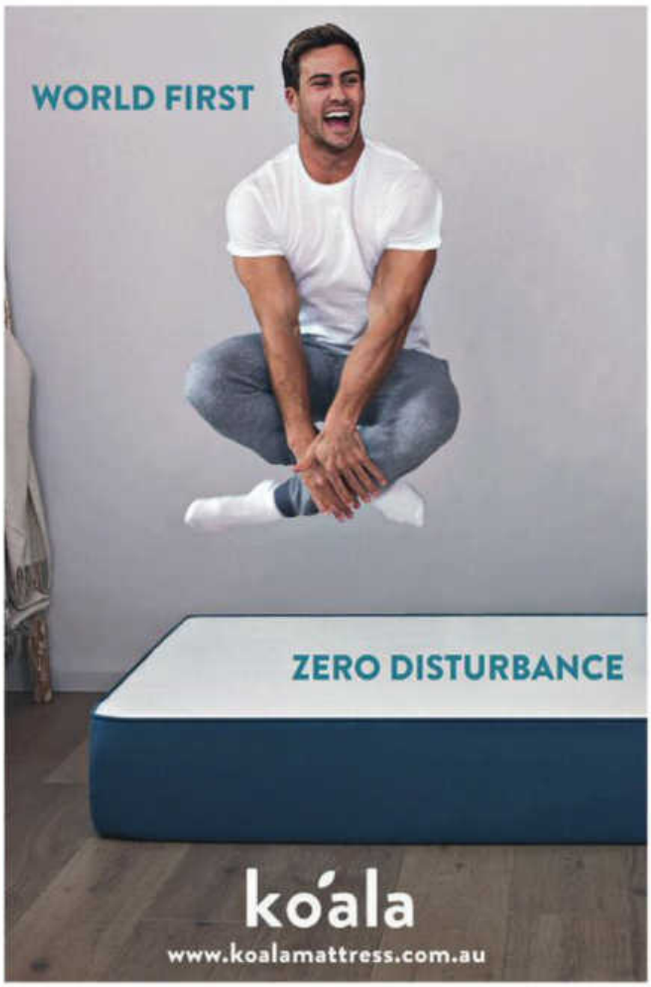
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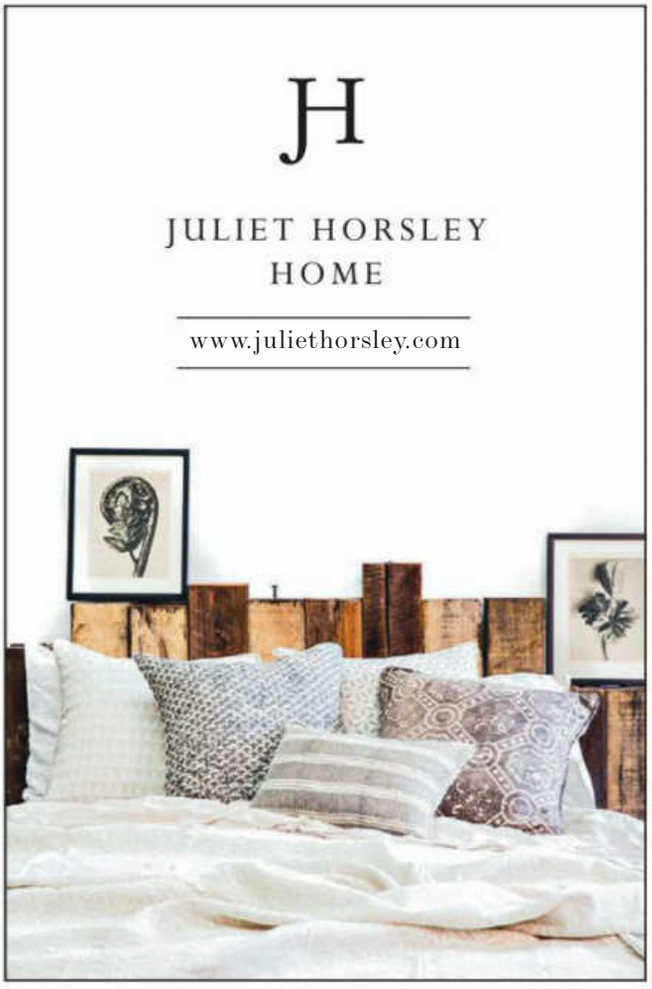


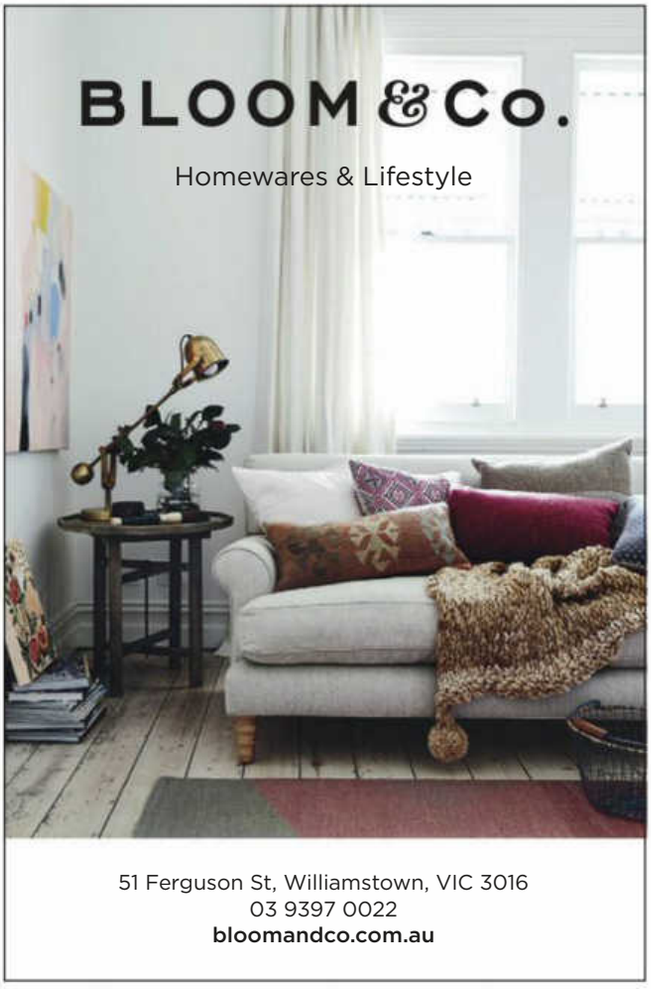

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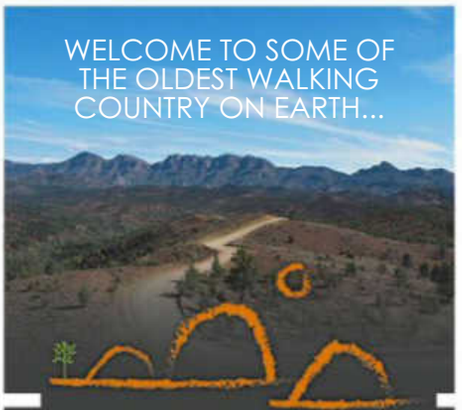
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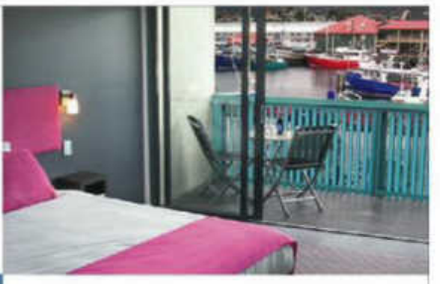
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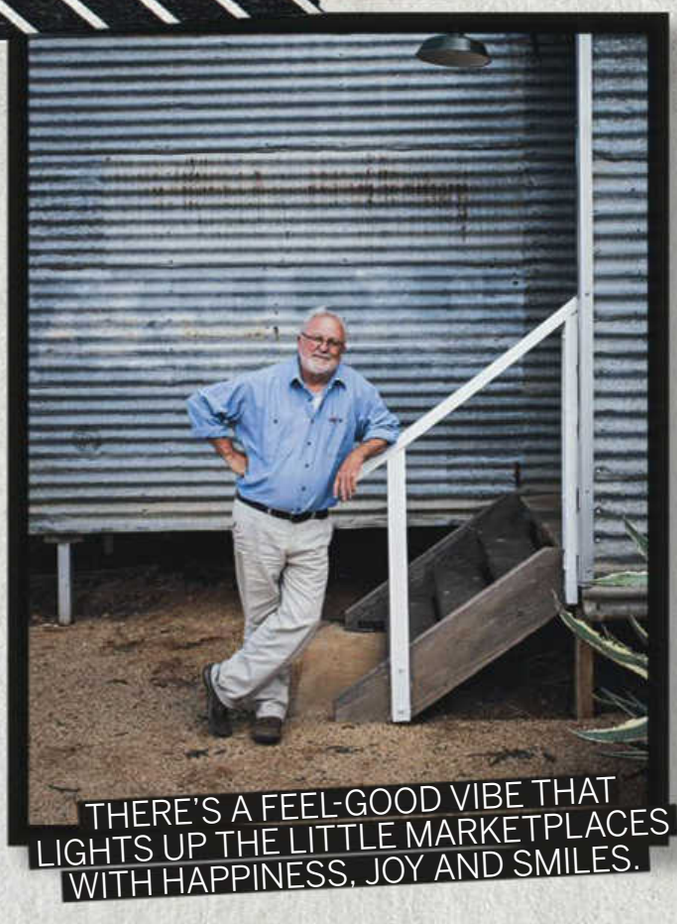
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LOOK, WE MIGHT not be at the cutting edge of trendsploitation out here on the prairie. But that's not all bad. We've not felt the need to flirt with urban technology experiments like traffic lights and parking meters, and no harm has come to us. Maybe we have dinner at lunchtime, tea after work and — against all prevailing correctness — we still have a smoko. But don't imagine that we're out of touch with communal fashion. We've now got a farmers' market.

Out here, you have to take a place very seriously if it has a farmers' market. You can't be indifferent about a movement that champions primary industry, sustainability, artisan respect and sausage sandwiches.

Farmers' markets provide a valuable sense of community and give consumers an opportunity to meet and talk directly with the producers of the food we are buying. Before farmers' markets, most Australians thought fruit and vegetables came from supermarkets. Only very few bothered to find out that they came from trucks parked behind the supermarkets.

Now we know even better. Australia embraced the farmers' market concept on the eve of the 21st century. At Dunedoo, we chose to wait it out to see if it was a goer and, 16 years later, we have given it the thumbs-up. Now, on a Saturday morning, we can buy a duck with our *Sydney Morning Herald* and a bale of lucerne hay with our leg of lamb.

We might not have ridden the crest of the farmers' market wave, but ours should be the template for all to come. It has none of the things you don't like. No brussels sprouts, no broccoli. Our local farms produce real food ready to eat. Mr McKay's farm produces farm-baked cakes and biscuits — fresh shortbread, cheesecake, butter cake, chocolate chip cookies and so on. Farmer Raines produces a mayonnaise that sets a new benchmark for mayonnaises globally. And Farmer Robinson produces a bread and butter cucumber pickle that could become the next addiction. This is smart farming, this is value-adding, this is try before you buy.

Every developed nation that features in the OECD Tax Database features a sausage sandwich at the hub of its farmers' market economy. But at our farmers' market, we graze on Allie Sullivan's smoked ham, shallot omelette, hollandaise sauce, roasted tomato and rocket on a toasted sourdough bun. This is one-upmanship of the highest order.

Our farmers produce goat's milk soaps, nature's own antibiotics, mustard relish, novelty candles and chilli jam. People are more interested than ever before about where their food comes from. Our farmers' market teaches us about the very heritage of cakes and biscuits and toasted breakfast buns. It brings the community together and builds long-term relationships between producers and consumers.

And it brightens the day. There's a feel-good vibe that lights up the little marketplaces with happiness, joy and smiles. At least until the inevitable ill-advised question — "Were these picked today?"

The market started at 8am. The producer got here at 6.30 to unload and set up his stall. He drove two hours to get here. Around 3.30am, he stumbled out of bed, had a shave and shower and grabbed a cup of coffee before hitting the road.

No, he yawns. He didn't really have time to pick them this morning... and he's yet to teach his vegetables to load themselves into the trailer. The questioner turns away, disappointed. "I thought that was the whole point of farmers' markets," he mumbles. "Food fresh from the farm."

The stallholder bangs his head on the trestle table and silently mouths some free advice. That's what's nice about farmers' markets. The advice is always free. CS

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY **MICHAEL WEE** BACKGROUND PHOTOGRAPHY **SAM McADAM-COOPER** STYLING **PHOEBE McEVOY**











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